The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

Volume 1 : Madhu Kāṇḍa

Nitya Ch

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The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

Volume 1 : Madhu Kāṇḍa

Nitya Chaitanya Yati

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न लगायें।

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The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

With original text in Roman transliteration,
English translation and appendices

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Commentary by
Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Volume 1 : Madhu Kāṇḍa

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Contents

Foreword vii
Guide to Sanskrit Pronunciation xii
General Introduction xiii
Invocation 1
Introduction 5

ADHYĀYA I

Brāhmaṇa 1 9
Brāhmaṇa 2 23
Brāhmaṇa 3 51
Brāhmaṇa 4 153
Brāhmaṇa 5 202
Brāhmaṇa 6 265
Appendix I 277
Appendix II 284
Appendix III 298

ADHYĀYA II

Brāhmaṇa 1 321
Brāhmaṇa 2 417
Brāhmaṇa 3 429
Brāhmaṇa 4 453
Brāhmaṇa 5 506
Brāhmaṇa 6 580
Appendix I 591
Appendix II 602
Appendix III 617
Appendix IV 628

Footnotes 637
Editorial Note 640
Index
Sanskrit 641
General 648

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FOREWORD

We human beings are busy creatures, often narrowly focused on our activities of the day. Too often we forget that our lives are but tiny fragments of a grand drama that has been unfolding from time immemorial. Immersing ourselves in the pleasures and concerns of the moment, we often ignore and even deny our relationship to the universal. And yet there is always the need to understand the context within which our daily lives unfold. Each of us searches for ways to connect with what is real and enduring, to know the timeless essence of what we are about. This book by Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati presents the distilled wisdom of thousands of years of Eastern thought in answer to our questions.

This is the first commentary of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which has undertaken the momentous task of digging into the hoary past in which the *Upaniṣad* was conceived, firmly taking hold of the invaluable treasures lying buried there and clearing away the dirt and debris of centuries of neglect and superstition. It reveals the wisdom of the ancient seer in a way that not only withstands critical scrutiny in the light of present-day understanding, but also sparkles with insights which help us to solve the riddles of our lives. Guru Nitya employs his comprehensive understanding of human nature, Eastern and Western philosophy, science, art and literature, to reveal the meaning of the mythical symbols and mystical dialogues in the *Upaniṣad* and their value in guiding both our everyday lives and our search for that wisdom which can carry us from untruth to truth, darkness to light and death to immortality.

This study of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is like the painting of a great master, spread over a vast canvas, yet rich with intricate detail. Before we look at the painting itself, let us take a

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moment to become familiar with the frame in which it is set. In ancient India, over a period roughly estimated to stretch from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C., the hearts of the people of that time lifted up hymns of praise to the divine which they conceived of in the form of deities like the goddesses of the dawn and water and the gods of sun, wind and fire. Sensitive to the beauties of nature and filled with a sense of awe, they gave voice to their praises and supplications in poetry which has a beauty and dynamism with a timeless appeal. Over time, these poems were written down and arranged according to meter, tone and topic. The earliest collected verses came to be called the *Ṛg Veda* (*ṛg* literally means hymn or praise and *veda* means knowledge. It was followed by the *Sāma Veda*. *Sāma* means song and the *Sāma Veda* is the words of the *Ṛg Veda* set to music.

The *Yajur Veda* was written down later in history and includes some material from the *Ṛg Veda*. A *yajus* is a prayer or formula and *Yajur Veda* is a literary rendition of formulas guiding the specific performance of different types of sacrifices. It was written at a time when the priestly class in society was promoting the sacred importance of their role in the correct performance of sacrifices as the vital core of the Vedic religion and the most valuable aspect of social life. The *Atharva Veda*, although often listed as the last *Veda*, or sometimes not even accorded the status of a *Veda*, actually has its roots in India's pre-historic contemplative culture. As such, it provided a basis for the Vedāntic revaluation of religion and philosophy. On one hand, it carried ritual to an absurd extreme with many charms and spells that were used to invoke blessings not only for every type of activity or endeavor in daily life, but also on each phase of the already very elaborate ritual sacrifices. Unlike the injunctions governing the exact performance of the rituals, however, the charms and spells were known and employed by people at all stratas of society. The *Atharva Veda* also includes passages which represent clear advancements in the development of the non-anthropomorphic concept of the Absolute *(brahman)* which includes both being and non-being.

As time passed, religious observances became ever more complex. Each of the *Vedas* sprouted prose appendices which gave more detailed explanations of the Vedic rituals and their performance. These texts were known as *Brāhmaṇas*. Although much

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of their content is boring minutiae, they also include parts which illustrate the meaning of the ritual practices with myths and legends whose vitality has inspired writers and poets throughout the centuries. The foremost among the *Brāhmaṇas* is the *Śatha-patha*, which means having a hundred paths or chapters. It was attached to the *Yajur Veda*. The last six chapters of the *Śatha-patha Brāhmaṇa* are what is known as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

Another group of texts called *Āraṇyakas* were also appended to the *Vedas*. They de-emphasized the performance of the rituals and focused on the essential principals expressed by the different aspects of the rituals and ancient myths. As the centuries had passed, Indian society had become more complex and, largely at the prompting of the priestly group, more segmented. Divisions in society had hardened into castes with different social standing and functions. The priests were central in the courts of the many kingdoms and the rituals they performed were intrinsic to every aspect of life. The sense of sacredness with which life itself had been imbued in the times of the composition of the early Vedic hymns became restricted to the province of the rituals and those who performed them. The social ramifications of the caste system were often cruel and unjust, especially to those who ranked lowest in social respect and economic well-being. Many wisdom seekers and teachers decided to disengage themselves from society altogether and went to live in remote forest and wilderness areas. It is very likely that the move to revalue the religious practices of the time to a more universal perspective came from these forest dwellers, taking shape as the *Āraṇyakas*, books of the forest. *Āraṇya* means a forest, a wilderness or a foreign or distant land.

Bṛhad means to be great in magnitude, with the more specific connotations of having many parts and of being ever-increasing. The *Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka* is made up of six *adhyāyas* (chapters). This volume contains the commentary on the first two chapters, consisting of 145 mantras or verses. These two chapters alone present an archetypal sacrifice, two creation myths, legends which elaborate the creation myths and which address the problem of evil and how to overcome it, two wisdom dialogues between human students and teachers and a mythical wisdom dialogue between deities. This work can be understood

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as an *Āraṇyaka* both in the sense of being one of the "books of the forest" which treat of the symbolic meaning of rituals and in the sense of itself being like a fecund rain-forest, full of many wondrous forms of life.

For our journey through the forest, Guru Nitya is not only an able and trustworthy guide who is very familiar with the territory, having a comprehensive knowledge of the whole spectrum of Indian philosophical texts and their placement in the broader context of both Eastern and Western philosophical inquiry. He is also a poet who can tune our ears to the music of the ancient bard, a mystic who can lead us to the peaks from which we can catch a glimpse of the ancient seer's breathtaking visions of reality, an artist and psychologist who can reveal the meaning of the ancient symbols in terms we can understand and apply.

In addition to representing the Vedic tradition, partaking of some of the attributes of both the *Brāhmaṇa* and *Āraṇyaka* type texts, this work is also an *Upaniṣad*. Collectively the *Upaniṣads* follow the *Vedas*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āraṇyakas* both in historical time and in the progression of human philosophical understanding. The teachings in the *Upaniṣads* return the sense of the sacred to all of life and declare the pursuit of wisdom to be a pathway open to all. This *Upaniṣad*, perhaps more than any of the others, explicitly removes some of the traditional barriers which attributed sacredness and wisdom only to males of the highest placed *(brahmin)* caste. The opening dialogue of the second chapter is one in which the purported wisdom teacher, a *brahmin*, ends up petitioning his far wiser student, a king (of the *kṣatriya* caste), to teach him true wisdom. The next dialogue is one in which the wisdom teacher Yājñavalkya's most attentive and uncompromising student is his wife, Maitreyī.

The wisdom dialogues of the second chapter exemplify the meaning of the word *upaniṣad* which literally means to sit down near to another to learn truth, to listen to the word of wisdom. The dialogues between the king Ajātaśatru and the *brahmin* Gārgya or between rishi Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī are examples of a student sitting together with a teacher and questioning and listening intently to the teacher's answers. The record of their dialogues and of the myths of the first chapter is also an *upaniṣad*; the book itself is a means by which one can come close to a revealer of truth and see the intimate secrets of reality un-

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veiled.

This wonderful treasure has been virtually inaccessible for centuries, obscured by language barriers - it was composed in the ancient and subtle language of Sanskrit - and the even more impenetrable wall of translations and commentaries afflicted by narrow religious ideologies and archaic philosophical hair-splitting. After completing an experiential commentary on the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, Guru Nitya decided to devote himself to exploring and unlocking the secrets of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. He brings the poetry, myths and symbols of the *Upaniṣad* alive, helping us to deepen our understanding of our own nature, human intercourse and the cosmos. But what is even more valuable about this commentary is that Guru Nitya applies his wisdom and compassion to point to the mysterious reality which underlies all appearance, again and again leading us away from the myriad distractions and confusions to which we are subject to the side of our Self, which is the truth, light and immortality which we seek.

Nancy Yeilding

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GUIDE TO SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION

The sounds indicated in the examples are approximations of the original Sanskrit sounds. Only the consonants which are significantly different from English pronunciation have been included.

Vowels

a	like the u in "but"
ā	like the a in "far"
i	like the e in "me"
ī	like the ee in "beet"
u	like the o in "to"
ū	like the oo in "pool"
ṛ	like th ri in "rig"
e	like the a in "gate"
ai	like the i in "high"
o	like the o in "note"
au	like the ou in "loud"

Consonants

ṅ	like the ng in "sing"
ñ	like the n in Spanish "Señor"
c	like ch in "eschew"
ch	like ch in "much"
gh	like gh in "loghouse"
jh	like geh in "hedgehog"
th	like th in "Othello"
dh	like dh in "adhere"
ph	like ph in "haphazard"
bh	like bh in "abhor"
ś	like the sh in "shove"
ṣ	like the sh in "fish"
ḥ	echos the vowel which immediately precedes it

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This commentary has been written with a much-needed missionary zeal to open up every secret of India's most logical and yet highly mystical and devotional insight to any person living anywhere in the world without any discrimination whatsoever. In order to prevent any part of wisdom from slipping into the dark dungeons of religious scruples or esotericism of any kind, it vigorously breaks down all traditional pretensions. It relies essentially on the soundness of logic (mathematical and semantic). Every statement in this book is substantiated by first-hand intuitive intimations of truth gained through incessant meditation.

The question of when the Vedic hymns came to be chanted by the Indian people is highly controversial. We have before us only shrewd guesses. Max Muller supposed the date to be 1200 B.C., Haug 2400 B.C., and Bāl Gangādhar Tilak 4000 B.C. Surendranāṭh Dāsgupta rightly notes that "The ancient Hindus seldom kept any historical record of their literary, religious or political achievements."[1] All that we know is that the *Vedas* were handed down from mouth to mouth from a period of unknown antiquity and the Hindus generally believed that the *a priori* truth of supreme wisdom did not dawn in the intellectual prowess of any individuated person.

The word *veda* is derived from *vid* which means knowledge. Knowledge comes to the cognitive faculty of a knower. Without a knower there is no one to know knowledge. The question arises: "From where does knowledge come to the recipient of knowledge?" Every idea or descriptive revelation of name, form and meaning has in it an intrinsic ability to reveal a fact that was never known before its perception or conception. Hence, it can be maintained that, independent of the human cognitive faculty, there is a source from which all shades of truth come to be registered in the recipient intelligence of the individual. Out of sleep, we wake up into the all-filling, all-embracing light of awareness. That awareness being with knowledge, knowledge is prior to the knower, *a priori*. Considered in that sense, everything is *veda*.

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and thus not a monitored proposition of truth deliberated by any person (*apauruṣeya*).

However, both the Indian people and the scholars who have taken an interest in studying and interpreting the *Vedas* have recognized four recorded documents: *Ṛg Veda, Sāma Veda, Yajur Veda* and *Aṭharva Veda*. There has been no adequate critical study of the historical intrigues that have cast doubt over whether the *Aṭharva Veda* should be considered as part of the traditional sacred texts or whether they are rightly known as *Triveda* (Three *Vedas*). The confusion generated by such smoke screens in the study of early Indian philosophy and mystical literature prevented a proper demarcation from being made between *śruti* and *smṛti*. *Smṛti* expresses conditional truth. *Śruti* indicates what is purely heard from the mouth of a wisdom teacher. It is a statement that has the distinct quality of being a universal pronouncement of truth not conditioned by time, the location and circumstance in which it is being announced, nor the personalities involved in its pronouncement and audition.

We should be very grateful to India's greatest masters who have sifted the ritualistic aspects of the Vedas from the wisdom texts. One is Jaimini who propounded the systematized aphorisms of rituals known as *Dharma Mīmāmsa, Pūrva Mīmāmsa* or *Karma Mīmāmsa*. This section of the *Veda* stands apart as a closed chapter of esoteric revelations which guided the home life of the priestly class of people. As all the injunctions given in these *Samhitās* are mainly to be acted upon and experienced, the bulk of the *Yajur Veda* is to be considered *a posteriori* and thus of lesser merit than the *a priori* wisdom texts which appear as poetic gleanings in the *Ṛg Veda* and consequently as rhapsodies of the *Sāma Veda*. It is to Bādarāyana's credit that he wrote the Vedāntic aphorisms which clearly put the mandate of *śruti* on the *Upaniṣads*. Śankara is probably the only philosopher who clearly cognized the ingenuity of Bādarāyana.[1] Following the wisdom vision of the great *sūtrakāra*, Śankara took upon himself the almost impossible task of eliciting from the *Upaniṣadic* mantras a meaningful structure that gives logically feasible correlations between the cosmic anatomy of truth and the psychological manifestation of that truth in one's empirical life on the one hand and metaphysical visions on the other. We stand firm with Śankara on this assumption and therefore do not give any exaggerated glory to the earlier mythological conception of Vedic symbols such

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as Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, etc. Only Śri Aurobindo was bold enough to sweep away all inflated credits given to the *Veda* in a language that is clear although it sounds drastic. He begins his great study, *The Secret of the Veda*, with the problem of the *Veda* and its solution:

> Is there at all or is there still a secret of the Veda? According to current conceptions the heart of that ancient mystery has been plucked out and revealed to the gaze of all, or rather no real secret ever existed. The hymns of the Veda are the sacrificial compositions of a primitive and still barbarous race written around a system of ceremonial and propitiatory rites, addressed to personified Powers of Nature and replete with a confused mass of half-formed myth and crude astronomical allegories yet in the making. Only in the later hymns do we perceive the first appearance of deeper psychological and moral ideas, - borrowed, some think, from the hostile Dravidians, the "robbers" and "Veda-haters" freely cursed in the hymns themselves, - and, however acquired, the first seed of the later Vedantic speculations. This modern theory is in accord with the received idea of a rapid human evolution from the quite recent savage; it is supported by an imposing apparatus of critical research and upheld by a number of Sciences, unhappily still young and still largely conjectural in their methods and shifting in their results, - Comparative Philology, Comparative Mythology and the Science of Comparative Religion. [2]

These words of Śri Aurobindo embolden us to uphold the vision of Yājñavalkya, the main hero of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, who was equally drastic in making a clean break with the plethora of ritualistic exaggerations in the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda*. He consequently became the artificer of the *Śukla Yajur Veda*, a philosophically revalued version of the *Yajur Veda*. We have sufficient reason to maintain the pristine purity of the Upaniṣadic concepts of the creation myth, *prajāpati* and *hiraṇyagarbha*. We stand glaringly apart from all religious speculations about the origin of the world, the installation of life in it and the occurrence of consciousness. The uncompromising boldness of our conviction makes this commentary vary greatly from all traditional studies

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which have been guided more by pretentious devotion than critical scrutiny.

We honor Sureśvara Acārya as a fearless leader who has made a path for critical inquiry into the *Upaniṣads* and Śankara's *Bhāṣyas*. The works attributed to Sureśvara are the *Naiskarmyasiddhi*, the *Mānasollasa*, the *Pancīkaranavārtika*, the *Taittirīyopaniṣadbhāsyavārtika*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaṇiṣadbhāsyavārtika* and the *Sambandhavārtika*. As Sureśvara was an eminent Mīmāmsaka before being defeated by Śankara in a debate, he was not allowed to write a commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* of Śankara. This is sad. However, he faithfully carried out his role as a continuator of Śankara by writing *Vārtikas* on *Aśvamedha Brāhmaṇa*, *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa*, *Maḍhu Brāhmaṇa* and the Yājñavalkya Maitreyī dialogue. "A *vārtika* means a work wherein there is the consideration of what is *ukta* (said), *anukta* (what is not said) and *durukta* (what is improperly said) by an author whose work is under the comment of the author of the Vārtika." [3] Needless to say that as Sureśvara's *Vārtika* was on Śankara's *Bhāṣyas*, the *ukta*, *anukta* and *durukta* in Śankara's commentary are sympathetically corrected by Sureśvara.

Sureśvara was a contemporary of Śankara who lived between 720 and 770 A.D. Narayana Guru, who came in our own century, 1854-1928, considered himself a sympathetic continuator of Śankara like Sureśvara. He restated *Advaita Vedānta* in his matchless classics, *Ātmopadeśa Śataka*, *Darśana Māla*, *Advaita Dīpika*, *Brahmavidyā Pañcakam* and *Arivu* so that all criticisms brought against Śankara's *Advaita Siddhānta* and *Māyā Vāda* can be adequately contained in his revaluation in spite of the glaring deviations between Śankara's philosophy and the other major schools of *Vedānta* such as those of Rāmānuja and Madhva. To appreciate that any philosopher who puts forward a vision of truth cannot be totally wrong and that he has a point of view to justify his philosophy, one needs a unitive vision with an overall epistemology, methodology and axiology. Each school of philosophy can be brought to the appropriate niche to which it belongs in such a scheme of correlation. This was accomplished by Narayana Guru in his presentation of ten complementary visions of truth which in their totality provide us with a comprehensive epistemological unity. This work has been commented on by this author as the *Psychology of Darśana Māla*, and more

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elaborately by Narayana Guru's direct disciple, Nataraja Guru, under the title, *An Integrated Science of the Absolute* in three volumes.

At this stage we do not want to go into the details of the very many intrigues which the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* was subjected to after the monumental works of Śankara: his commentary on the ten *Upaniṣads*, *Gīta Bhāṣya* and *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*. One hundred and eight well-known *Upaniṣads* are listed in the *Muktika Upaniṣad* and classified under the different *Vedas*. The *Ṛg Veda* has ten *Upaniṣads* connected with it, the principal ones being *Aitareya* and *Kauṣītaki*.

Yajur Veda was split into *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* and *Śukla Yajur Veda*. *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* preceded *Śukla Yajur Veda*. There are thirty-two *Upaniṣads* associated with *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* of which the main ones are *Kaṭha*, *Taittirīya* and *Śvetāśvatara*. Of the nineteen *Upaniṣads* connected with the *Śukla Yajur Veda* the most significant are *Īśāvāsya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*.

There are sixteen *Upaniṣads* associated with the *Sāma Veda*. The most important are *Kena* and *Chāndogya*.

Atharva Veda, which is often treated as a heretical *Veda*, not respectable enough to be counted along with the other three *Vedas*, has appended to it the cream of the *Upaniṣads*, which give the substance of *Advaita Vedānta*. They are thirty-one in number. The most significant are *Praśna*, *Muṇḍaka* and *Māndūkya*.[4] In the *Maḍhu Brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* itself, there is an attempt to cover up the identity of Aṭharvan to whom the *Atharva Veda* is attributed. We have brought to light any such sleights of hand given in the *Upaniṣad* by later intruders.

The first volume of this commentary contains the full text of all the mantras given in the first two chapters (*adhyāyas*) of the *Upaniṣad* which are known collectively as the *Maḍhu Kāṇḍa*. They include the *Aśvamedha Brāhmaṇa*, *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa*, *Maḍhu Brāhmaṇa* and the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī. In this section, *śravana*, (listening to the wisdom narration of the first principles of truth) is most important. The *Maḍhu Kāṇḍa* stands apart as a comprehensive philosophy of the main *Upaniṣads* and *Vedānta* in general without any attempt being made to create a peg on which to hang anyone's private speculative systematization. That is why, even after Śankara's penetrating exposition of some of the most complicated mantras,

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Rāmānuja and Madhva felt they had enough room to elaborate their theories, copiously quoting from the same *Upaniṣad* Śankara used to establish his non-dual philosophy, *Advaita Vedānta.*

In Śri Aurobindo's estimate of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and Śankara's commentary on it, he says:

> The Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, at once the most obscure and the profoundest of the Upanishads, offers peculiar difficulties to the modern mind. If its ideas are remote from us, its language is still more remote. Profound, subtle, extraordinarily rich in rare philosophical suggestions and delicate psychology, it has preferred to couch its ideas in a highly figurative and symbolical language, which to its contemporaries, accustomed to this suggestive dialect, must have seemed a noble frame for its riches, but meets us rather as an obscuring veil. To draw aside this curtain, to translate the old Vedic language and figures into the form contemporary thought prefers to give to its ideas is the sole object of this commentary. The task is necessarily a little hazardous. It would have been easy merely to reproduce the thoughts and interpretations of Shankara in the modern tongue; if there were an error, one could afford to err with so supreme an authority. But it seems to me that both the demands of truth and the spiritual need of mankind in this age call for a restoration of old Vedantic truth rather than for the prolonged dominion of that single side of it systematized by the mediaeval thinker. The great Shankaracharya needs no modern praise and can be hurt by no modern disagreement. Easily the first of metaphysical thinkers, the greatest genius in the history of philosophy, his commentary has also done an incalculable service to our race by bridging the intellectual gulf between the sages of the Upanishads and ourselves. [5]

After giving Śankara his due praise, Śri Aurobindo makes a very pithy remark: "Nevertheless, it remains true that Shankara's commentary is interesting not so much for the light it sheds on the Upanishad as for its digressions into his own philosophy." [6] It is exactly for this reason candidly given by Śri Auro-

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bindo that we have taken the freedom to stand closer to the mantras of the *Upaniṣad* rather than going into any tangent to fortify a particular school of thought.

Our second volume, which contains the philosophical visions and summations of traditional knowledge so brilliantly declared by Yājñavalkya, has the solid foundation of reason. Even the most modern of books discussing the grammar and politics of truth cannot excel Yājñavalkya in the analysis of any given theme, however mythical, legendary, mystical or symbolic. Yājñavalkya has an honest way of confronting the numerous paradoxes and enigmas that are copiously presented before him. In fact, Yājñavalkīya is the heart of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

In the third chapter Yājñavalkya is grilled by all who are aspiring to get the *dakṣiṇa* of a thousand cows decorated with gold. They stand up and ask questions of Yājñavalkya in the following order:

1. Aśvala, the court priest of Janaka, is the first to confront Yājñavalkya. He begins with a question about what philosophical vision (*darśana*) can save a sacrificer from death. Yājñavalkya meets all the questions of Aśvala by enumerating the instances of the sacrificing priest substituting for the sacrificer. In each, the priest plays a different role of identification with the transcendent factors which give an absolutist identity to the sacrificer.

2. Ārtabhāga, who belonged to the clan of Jaratkāru, initiates a long and elaborate discussion with Yājñavalkya about the bondage ensuing from the empiricism of the phenomenal world as *graha* and *atigraha*, and the release from these respectively as *mukti* and *atimukti*. In this dialogue we also come to know about the death of death.

3. Bhujyu, the Lāhyāyani, is the next contestor. He begins with the narration of an incident which can throw light on the extremely complicated life situations which can so totally transform a person that his or her faculties can be lamentably changed into pathological derangement. Bhujyu's questions take us to the most confusing subtleties of philosophical speculation. Yājñavalkya discusses threadbare the distinction between the manifested world and the unmanifested.

4. Uṣasta, the son of Cakra, then confronts Yājñavalkya. His questions are about the innermost Self and its identity with the Absolute (*brahman*). Yājñavalkya gives several examples showing all shades of concepts in which the Self can be related

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with the Absolute.

5. Kahola, the son of Kuṣitaka, asks Yājñavalkya the secret of the Self that is envisioned directly by one's intuition. Yājñavalkya suggests that this is possible only by transcending the horrors of this world such as hunger and thirst, sorrow and desire, disease and death.

6. The next questioner is none other than the most illustrious woman who was revered by all seers, Gārgī, the daughter of Vācaknau. She begins questioning Yājñavalkya about the foundation of the cosmic order, beginning with water. Yājñavalkya explains how the discursive is immanent in the unitive. She is satisfied for the time being.

7. Uddālaka, the son of Aruṇa, is the next to question Yājñavalkya. Like Bhujyu, Uddālaka also narrates the incident of a *gaṇḍharva* who possessed the wife of Patañcala Kāpya. To answer him, Yājñavalkya goes into the subtleties of the golden thread of *sūtrātma* running through every item of cognition and points out the immortal indweller (*antaryāmī*), to the satisfaction of Uddālaka.

8. Once again Gārgī gets up to ask Yājñavalkya two formidable questions to clearly discern the warp and woof of the manifested world. Yājñavalkya goes into all the details of the paradoxes that lurk in the heart of the Absolute. He also introduces her to the secret of the imperishable word, *akṣara*.

9. The last questioner in this fascinating philosophical discussion with Yājñavalkya is Śakala's son Vidagdha. He asks about the number of gods. Yājñavalkya reduces the *devas* from three thousand and three to one. He also explains what the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas are.

This third *adhyāya* closes with the tables turned in the conference hall. Yājñavalkya now questions all his rivals. This he does admirably by quoting traditionally known verses. This section gives us a full insight into the application of dialectical methodology in sorting out all the subtle philosophical questions.

The fourth *adhyāya* gives a deep insight into the multifarious functions, concepts and value-dynamics of the Absolute through a series of dialogues between Yājñavalkya and King Janaka of Videha. Yājñavalkya's questions to Janaka about his understanding of various points serve to clarify all aspects of the Self, the individuated person and the world of manifestation with all its cosmic and psychological details. It is not that Janaka was una-

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ware of what Yājñavalkya was teaching. Their dialogue is a literary device to insure that no question relating to the search and realization of the Self is left unexamined. Janaka tells Yājñavalkya about his several teacher/informants and what each one had conveyed to him:

1. Jitvan, the son of Śilina, told Janaka that the organ of speech is the Absolute. As a correction of that, Yājñavalkya tells Janaka that the organ of speech is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as *prajña*.

2. Next Janaka mentions Udańka, the son of Śulba, who taught him that the vital breath (*prāṇa*) is the Absolute. This instruction seems partial and inadequate to Yājñavalkya. So he says that the organ of smell is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as what is dear. He elaborates on the idea of *prāṇa* and how it is dear.

3. Next Janaka tells Yājñavalkya that Barku, the son of Vṛṣṇa, told him that the Absolute is the organ of visual perception. Yājñavalkya reminds Janaka of those who have no faculty of visual perception. As before, he says that the faculty of visual perception is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as truth.

4. Next comes Gardabhīvipīta, a descendent of Bharadvāja. He taught Janaka that the faculty of hearing is the Absolute. As before, Yājñavalkya says that the faculty of hearing is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as infinite.

5. Then Janaka speaks of Satyakāma, the son of Jābāla, who taught him that the mind is the Absolute. After proving that instruction to be inadequate, Yājñavalkya tells Janaka that the mind is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as *ānanda*.

6. Finally, Janaka tells Yājñavalkya that Vidagdha, the son of Śakala, taught him that the Absolute is the heart (*hṛdaya*). This also, Yājñavalkya considers inadequate. So he says that the *hṛdaya* is the body of the Absolute, space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation, and it should be meditated upon as existence. With this, the first *brāhmaṇa* of the fourth chapter comes to a close.

In the second *brāhmaṇa*, Janaka adopts the position of a model disciple and asks Yājñavalkya to instruct him, even

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though he is a fully realized person. Yājñavalkya asks Janaka, "When you leave this body, do you know where you will go?" To this, Janaka replies "No," thus providing Yājñavalkya with the opportunity to fully explicate his wisdom as a *śāsana* (authentic instruction) for posterity. Yājñavalkya tells Janaka that the *puruṣa* in the right eye is named Indha (from which Indra is derived) and the puruṣa in the left eye is named Virāj. They are seen as spouses who consummate their love in the heart. Then Yājñavalkya describes the heart, blood vessels and nervous system. Then he talks about the seer who is identified with *prajña* (the state of the Self in deep sleep).

The third *brāhmaṇa* presents another encounter between Yājñavalkya and Janaka. The king asks Yājñavalkya to describe the effulgence of the *puruṣa*. Yājñavalkya reveals it to be none other than the radiance of the sun. When Janaka asks further what serves as the source of brilliance when the sun has set, Yājñavalkya answers that it is the sheen of the moon. He continues with the statement that when the sun and moon are not shining, the radiance of the *puruṣa* is fire (*agni*). When Janaka further questions him, he says that when the sun, moon and fire are not present, the light of awareness comes from the word and, finally, that when there is no sun, moon, fire or word, the Self shines by its own light. At this point, Janaka asks what the Self is and Yājñavalkya answers that *ātmā* is that light which has comprehensive cognition by its own light in the senses, mind and intellect.

In the eighth mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya gives the unusual revelation that when the individuated person (*puruṣa*) assumes a body, it is conjoined with evil and, at the time of death, all such accumulated evil is discarded. In the ninth mantra Yājñavalkya describes the several worlds in which we are destined to live - this world, the one beyond and the world of dreams. Then he elaborates a theory of dreams which has been incorporated into the studies of dreams done by modern psychologists. The third *brāhmaṇa* also includes a detailed discussion of the state of deep sleep.

In the fourth *brāhmaṇa* a descriptive psycho-physical and psycho-physiological explanation of death is given as a reversal of the process of individuation that happens at the time of birth. In its final culmination, the Self is fully identified with the Absolute. Yājñavalkya takes this opportunity to describe the ascending

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path of no return and the descending path of recurrence. In the fifth *brāhmaṇa* we return to the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī which is a repetition of what was given in the second *brāhmaṇa* of the second *adhyāya*. It serves as a review and additional emphasis on the instruction given in the *Maḍhu Kāṇḍa*.

The final volume of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, consisting of the fifth and sixth *adhyāyas*, is called *Khila Kāṇḍa*, the supplementary appendix. *Khila* literally means a wasteland. It is to be understood as the all-encompassing reality of which due cognizance has not been taken. In this case it is to be regarded as a comprehensive compendium which gives detailed attention to the basic notions of *Vedānta* philosophy. *Maḍhu Kāṇḍa* is mainly to listen to; *Muni Kāṇḍa* to ponder over with intensive critical awareness and sympathetic apperception; and *Khila Kāṇḍa* to experience whatever has been discovered and contemplated upon in the previous two *Kaṇḍas*. It thus comprehends the overall essence of *Vedānta*. The fifth *adhyāya* includes fifteen *brāhmaṇas* and the sixth chapter five *brāhmaṇas*. The sixth *adhyāya* concludes with a guru-disciple hierarchy. The lineage given at the end of the second *adhyāya* refers to the father of each guru while the one given at the end of the sixth *adhyāya* refers to their mothers. Each enumeration involves certain intricacies which we discuss.

The Peace Invocation with which the *Upaniṣad* begins is repeated at the beginning of the fifth chapter:

AUM pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam
pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya
pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate
AUM śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

This serves the purpose of showing that the *Khila Kāṇḍa* is a recapitulation of the first two *kāṇḍas*. The rishi's own interpretation of the mantra is also given. *AUM* is specifically mentioned as the *ākāśa* identified with the Absolute. In the third verse of his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, Narayana Guru adopts the Upaniṣadic rishi's teaching which identifies the unmanifested *ākāśa* with the Absolute that can be both causal and consequential:

Seemingly outside and yet immanent in the Absolute as

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specific modes, seen here as the five elements, like sky,
when contemplated, should become like waves
rising in rows from the treasury of the watery deep,
without any separate reality whatsoever.

The archetypal model of the first manifestation of life, *prajāpati*, which was presented in the second *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter, is remembered in the second *brāhmaṇa* of the fifth chapter. It shows a more active and continuous intimacy of *prajāpati* with the shining ones, human beings and the dark ones. The present age is considered to be the fag end of a cosmic cycle and the modus operandi of the contemplation that suits this age is given in the subsequent *brāhmaṇas* up to the thirteenth. The full implication of the *gāyatri* chant is given in the fourteenth *brāhmaṇa*. The *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, which is also part of the *Śukla Yajur Veda*, is accepted as an epitomization of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. The fifteenth *brāhmaṇa* gives four of the essential mantras of the *Īśāvāsya*.

In the *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyana* and the *Bhagavad Gīta* there is a descending dialectics in which the fully informed seer of realization is ultimately brought back to the here and now to live as a *pūrṇa prajña* to set an example to his contemporaries. The sixth *adhyāya* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* is essentially used to complete the arch of the ascending and descending scheme of dialectics.

The author, being a direct disciple of Nataraja Guru and a grand-disciple of Narayana Guru, has taken all the guidelines they have given to write this fairly exhaustive commentary: firstly, to make the wisdom of the rishis available to all who care to know and live the word-wisdom of the *Upaniṣads*; and secondly, to give *Advaita Vedānta* its rightful place in the systems of Indian philosophy. Narayana Guru took upon himself the great task of steering the unitive philosophy of India past the confusion and sectarian exaggerations that have periodically arrested the progress of the Indian vision of truth. In this connection, we think it is appropriate to summarize his life and teachings as retold by Swami Ranganāthānanda of the Śri Ramakrisha Mission:

> Sri Narayana Guru came of a section of India's population which possessed no rights and privileges and which consequently received the name of depressed classes in

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modern times. Totally neglected and often oppressed and suppressed for a thousand years by the higher classes, the seventy million depressed classes of India, as of other parts of the world, constituted the basis of economic prosperity and social well-being of the country, as they formed the entire labour front. Continued slavery for generations had produced in these classes, as it is bound to produce in any class of men, an oppressive sense of its own littleness and helplessness - a sense of despair. Slavery is bad enough; but a situation in which the slave begins to accept his position as part of a natural social order - a position in which there is dictated duty without any inherent right and privilege - is something which reduces man to the level of cattle and robs him of his human prerogatives. This was precisely the condition of the Indian masses at the beginning of the nineteenth century when India was thrown open to the play of world forces. The mingling of the age-old idealism of India with the thought-forms and forces of the modern world has ushered in a new epoch in Indian history...[which] does not exhaust itself in a mere political upheaval but assumes more enduring forms of a religious awakening and social transformation....

Social progress in India has always been on the lines of sharing the benefits of culture and of higher Hindu thought by larger and larger sections of the population. Democratization of knowledge and opportunity meant also elevation of the people. The best genius of Hinduism lay in this direction in a special sense. If there had been stagnation due to the dead weight of meaningless custom and oppressive tradition, it meant only that society had forgotten the larger plan and purpose of the ancient leaders. Society is then in need of a new dynamism. In India this urge to progress has always come from great saints and sages and not from mere political thinkers. A new passion for *dharma* has supplied the necessary revolutionary urge....

But the awakening of the conscience of the privileged is only one act in the drama of enfranchisement. The other equally, if not more, important part is the process of self-discovery on the part of the oppressed themselves. This

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period of awakening of the masses to a sense of their own worth and importance is a critical period in the history of a people. It may be either explosive and destructive or gentle and constructive, but the effect is revolutionary in both cases. The most serious criticism against a violent revolution is that it rarely achieves its original purpose. The second type is more permanent and far-reaching in its effects.

That these recent changes in Hindu society are of a peaceful and constructive character is as much due to the good sense of the Indian masses as to the soundness of Hindu social philosophy and ideals. The movement of reform associated with Sri Narayana Guru is unique in one important respect: it is entirely constructive and devoid of any bitterness against the higher classes....This is the meaning and significance of the Indian conception of *dharma* - a conception which seeks the unity of social endeavour through harmony and co-operation. It is to the eternal glory of Sri Narayana Guru to have inaugurated a movement which embodies in itself this unique genius of Hinduism and to have released the forces of the Spirit for the solution of the many pressing problems of even the mundane life of his people....In this, he takes rank with saints and reformers of earlier centuries and, more especially, with Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh fraternity. Except in one respect, there is striking similarity between the life and work of these two masters who are separated by about five centuries. Nanak belonged to the higher classes but fraternized with and reformed the lowly and the lost in Hindu society. Narayana Guru was born with the social stigma of an untouchable among those with whom he worked and whose life he transformed. The so-called lowness of his birth could in no way hide or smother the richness of his native endowment. It is this wealth of native genius that enabled him to raise himself and his people above the depressing circumstances of an unjust social order. He imparted life to the almost dead bones and muscles of his people and made them conscious of their human worth and dignity. Rightly is he called the Guru whose breath is hope and whose touch is life....

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World events are compelling us to the view that the best legislative authority in the world is character. The ṛṣi or sage has always been recognized as the law-giver in India. His knowledge and his detachment constitute valid sanctions for the equity of his legislation. In Sri Narayana Guru the people found such a law-giver. Himself a monk and a man of God, in virtue of which he rose above all social conventions and obligations, he yet descended to the level of his fellow-men in an attitude of compassion, and lent his loving hand to drag them out of their misery. And he had the supreme satisfaction to witness, even in his own lifetime, the ample reward of his labours in the improved tone of the moral and material well-being of his people....

In all that he was and in all that he did, Sri Narayana Guru stands as the supreme symbol of hope and redemption to the depressed classes of India. [7]

As this commentary is being written in both English and Malayalam, and each mantra is given time for insightful spiritual experience, it is a time-consuming work. The commentator is given only very little freedom by the Upaniṣadic rishi. As each mantra is commented upon after deep meditation, the heaviness of the work load is mitigated by the great joy of listening to the golden whispering of the rishi. It fills the mind of the commentator and his associates, the disciples and students of Narayana Gurukula, Fernhill, with so much joy that the work can be called a *tapasya* in *sānanda samādhi*. It is our hope that our readers will be equally benefited by the freshness of the ideas and the categorical certitude that each word brings to the listener and the reader.

Before undertaking this commentary, the commentator prepared himself with forty years of discipline and study. It is therefore almost a spontaneous recording of the three *kāṇḍas* consisting of six *adhyāyas* that is being made over the course of three years. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the rishis of the past, the gurus and *ācaryas* both of the East and the West, among whom I should mention by name Śri Śankarācarya, Narayana Guru and Nataraja Guru, for having showered their grace on me all through this work. I am beholden to four other pilgrims on the path of the *Upaniṣad*, Swami

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Mādhavānanda, Swami Nikhilānanda and Swami Mridānanada, all of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, and my most beloved comrade in learning, Dr. T.N.N. Bhattathiripad.

Before the commentary comes to the reader, many processes, both of the editorial mind and the technicalities of the computer, must harmonize. In editing and preparing the English manuscript of all three volumes, Nancy Yeilding, disciple, friend, and Registrar of the East-West University of Brahmavidyā, acted as a devoted friend in need. She also carried out the word processing both in India and the United States. In India, she was aided by M.D. Sanal and Peter Moras, and, at the Western Headquarters of the East-West University in the United States, by Śraddha Durand and Swami Vyasa Prasad. Another friend who was a great aid in the US was Brian Berman.

Finally, I feel very grateful to our publishers, D.K. Printworld, (P) Ltd., and I should especially mention K. Rai Mittal who has been enthusiastic from the very beginning to make this a book of aesthetic excellence. The drawing for the cover of this volume was made by the Gurukula's youngest disciple and artist, Sapna Balakrishnan. To all our associates and to the reader, I wish undiminishing happiness.

Nitya Chaitanya Yati

Notes:

[1] Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1975, p. 10.

[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Secret of the Veda*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, 1971, p. 1.

[3] Shoun Hino, *Sureśvara's Vartika on Yājñavalkya Maitreyī Dialogue*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1982, p. 8.

[4] *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I, The Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, 1937, p. 347.

[5] Sri Aurobindo, *The Upanishads*, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, 1971, p. 397.

[6] Ibid., p. 398.

[7] Swami Ranganathananda, *Eternal Values for A Changing Society*, Vol. II, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1985, p. 190-195.

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INVOCATION

AUM pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam
pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya
pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate

AUM śantiḥ śantiḥ śantiḥ

We are about to leave the twentieth century behind and enter into the twenty-first century. We have seen both the merits and demerits of developing positive sciences and the democratic culture of socio-economic and political ideologies. On all sides we have become both specialists and experts in the science of exploitation. We have made many technological devices to exploit the physical and cosmic inheritance which is available to us in the earth's crust, the biosphere, including the oceans, and several layers of the stratosphere. We also have made many subjective devices to persuade our fellow human beings to submit themselves to disciplines that are contrary to their nature so that a handful of willful and intelligent people can always keep the masses under their thumbs and rule over them with vested interests.

Our exploitation began with physical slavery. From that we have now advanced to the slavery of the human mind and passions. Today we are slaves of machines and of many hypostatic beliefs pertaining to financial or monetary concepts. We can say that we have developed *saṁsāra* to an extent beyond which we cannot go any further. We have seen the far-off star by denying the Self which is nearer than even the ego with which one identifies. It is in this context that we want to turn to the direction in which the immortal seers of the world have seen a way for us to

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integrate ourselves into the truthful foundations of a more dignified human outlook. The direction which we want to explore is not religious revivalism or nationalistic emotionalism.

The *Upaniṣad* was not conceived of to bring large masses under the sway of its discipline. It begins with just two people, a seeker and the seeker's counterpart, a seer. The seeker is puzzled by questions. The seer has answers which are absolutely clear. Such being the situation of the *Upaniṣad* there has to be a face-to-face relationship and an intensive encounter between the teacher and the taught. It is as if two persons, each with their own physical peculiarities and undeniable personality uniqueness, come as close as possible in order to know each other and for each to know himself or herself by knowing the other. Hence the situation is dialectical.

In a quiet place, far away from the madding crowd, in the aloneness of their search and philosophical vision, they sit with their thoughts gathered into themselves. Favoured by the sublime silence of their souls, they give an invocation of peace. They are not praying to anyone, nor do they postulate a reality other than that to which they totally belong. The first thing that they come to comprehend is the paradox of an inconceivable unity which holds together many conceivable probabilities and possibilities. A person can be both a contemplative and an engineer, a scientist and a technician, a seer and a doer, an aspirant and a performer. The natural consequence of the pairing of these counterparts is an experience into which the search and action lead the person. The experience can be one of pleasure or pain. In either case it marks the core of one's value vision.

In the invocation the seeker and the seer are respectively relating themselves to what is perceived and what emerges from a contemplative pondering of the perceivable. The seer integrates many reductions, permutations, observations and generalizations, and traces a homogeneity that runs through varying experiences. Thus the seer's vision includes the many that are spread out in the far and the beyond. Pointing to that he says, *AUM pūrṇam adaḥ*, "That is perfect; it is the plenum."

Let us stop here for a moment and think of how many triangles we can conceive of in the spatial manifestation, varying in dimensions, which can have relevance to the microscopic world, the microcosmic world and the macrocosmic world. The variegation has no limit. Yet, will any triangle be different from the ar-

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chetypal triangle with three sides and three angles? All types of triangles can be identified with the typical triangle which is also the archetypal triangle. The seeker sees the assembly of PQR as an isosceles triangle, ABC as an equilateral triangle and XYZ as an obtuse triangle. He or she can say, "Well as a triangle, each one is perfect," *pūrṇam idam.*

No mathematical genius can find a more enlightened way than this of relating oneself with a certitude of truth. Whatever is put together in terms of Absolute truth can be taken apart without causing any violence to the eternal or perennial principle of truth based on which the temporary device is put together. When the fabrication comes to its finished excellence the seeker and the seer see how the plenum emerges from the plenum. When it is undone in the phenomenal world they can still go to the plenum of the noumenon on which it is established.

Such is the brilliant opening of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* Let us meditate on all aspects of this grand invocation of peace and seriously enter into this study.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is among the ten major *Upaniṣads*. It is a dialectical narration in prose. It has a total of six *adhyāyas* or chapters which are divided into forty-seven *brāhmaṇas* (sections). The first chapter has six *brāhmaṇas*. The first *brāhmaṇa*, having only two mantras (verses), is a mystical, psychological, and philosophical introduction to the epistemology, methodology and axiology of the entire *Upaniṣad*. The student has to sit with each mantra, each *brāhmaṇa*, and the special terminology of each chapter for a long time with a lot of inner leisure to soak into the depth of the mystical and philosophical visions of the various sages, scholars, and novices who take part in the dialogues recorded in this *Upaniṣad*. Both the manner of presentation and the topics of discussion remind us of the literary device, philosophical profoundity and poetic beauty of the dialogues of Plato. While Socrates is the main character in *Plato's Dialogues*, rishi Yājñavalkya is the central figure of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

The first *brāhmaṇa* has in it a spacio-temporal scheme of correlation which is to be structurally studied. We also see in it the allegoric presentation of an archetypal horse that is alluded to again and again in various mythologies that have emerged from prehistoric times up to the Upaniṣadic period including the epics and the *Bhagavad Gīta*. We will go into the details of all these allusions one by one. First we shall briefly consider the significance of three emphases on transformation in time.

1. The first is the psycho-semantic transformation by which the spirit transforms into idea, idea into configurations in the preconscious, and then to instrumental devices of the psychosomatic system which enables conceptual ideation to be symbolized, both in oral expression and in figurative expression. There-

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after it is convertible into any selected medium of language. This reference to the psycho-semantic transformation of the spirit into the primeval vision of the configuration of ideas has a historical reference also. From the Vedic period up to the Epic period, Indian scriptural teachings, such as the Vedic *samhitas* and *āraṇyakas* were mainly transmitted orally from teachers to their disciples and retained in the memories of their students. What happened through millions of years genetically persists as an engineering skill in our own learning faculties. Ideas are formulated and developed into language in a mysterious inner faculty which Indians speak of as an organic constructive development that can be traced from the inexplicable *para* to a psychic configuration in the preconscious called *paśyanti*, and a semantic orchestration very secretly made in a hinterland of creation called *madhyama*. The idea is then ready for articulation in which the sublime is reverberated in the gross, called *vaikhari*. Thus a supercondensation of historical time recurs every time the individual person is in need of spontaneously originating an idea and finally succeeding in transmitting it through words to the person with whom he or she is in immediate encounter.

In between oral narration and verbal recording, several years of historical development took place in the evolution of human speech and language. All these are suggested in the opening mantra. The first reference is to the dawn. The dawn suggests a period of darkness which is coming to a close, to be followed by a period of positive brightness. It is in this context that the allegory of the mythical horse is presented as a detailed study in the symbolic art of correlating subtleties by allegorically assembling a number of metaphors into a single figure. In the *Theaetetus*, a famous dialogue of Plato, there also is a reference to a mare as a symbolic expression of the non-anthropomorphic presence of beauty.

2. The second transformation deals with how we pass on from the psycho-physical world, in which our senses and instinctive mind are very busy, to the intuitive and brilliant speculation which is often referred to as *dharma jijñāsa anantaram brahma jijñāsa*. It is paralleled by the historical transformation implied in this *brāhmaṇa* of the closing of a dark period of India's wisdom teaching which bristled with several ritualistic practices which can be abundantly seen in the *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharvan*.

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They needed drastic correction, ethically, morally, aesthetically, spiritually and philosophically. In the actual history of India only Śankara stuck firmly with a daylight philosophy by uncompromisingly denying all private and esoteric benefits of rituals. He favoured the open and dynamic realization of the spirit by resorting to dialectical reasoning and pinning one's faith in the profound postulations of the *Upaniṣads*. Indian historians of philosophy became very apologetic and tried to hide the glaring truth of this opening *brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* by parading a type of exegesis which is alluded to in the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* as concealing the face of truth with a golden disk. The Indian pretense to holiness and sacredness is somewhat repugnant to the spirit of this *Upaniṣad* which stands by solid truth and remorseless application of reason of which one of the valiant exponents was the brave woman Vācaknavī Gārgī presented later in the *Upaniṣad*.

3. The last but most important transformation we should learn from this *brāhmaṇa* is how the individuated aspirant, after living in the dark morass of the *saṁsāra* of relativistic plight in this phenomenal world to the age of fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty or sixty years, finally comes to the end of the dark tunnel of ignorance and emerges into the invigorating dawn with which we are greeted by the unparalleled wisdom teaching of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

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ADHYĀYA I

Brāhmaṇa 1

Mantra 1

AUM. uṣa vā aśvasya medhyasya śiraḥ. sūryacakṣuḥ vātaḥ prānaḥ, vyāttam agnirvaiśvānaraḥ, samvatsara ātmāśvasya medhyasya adyauḥ pṛṣṭham, antarikṣamudaram, pṛthivī pājasyam, diśaḥ pārśve, avāntardiśaḥ parśavaḥ, ṛtvo'ṅgāni, māsāścārdhamāsāśca parvāṇi, ahorātrāṇi pratiṣṭhāḥ, nakṣatrāṇyasthīni, nabho māṁsāni. ūvaddhyam sikatāḥ, sindhavo gudāḥ, yakṛcca klomānaśca parvatāḥ, oṣadhayaśca vanaspatayaśca lomāni, udyan pūrvārdhaḥ nimlocañjaghanārdhaḥ, yadvijṛmbhate tadvidyotate, yadvidhūnute tatstanayati, yanmehati tadvarṣati, vāgevāsya vāk.

Word Meanings

AUM - AUM; medhyasya aśvasya - of the sacrificial horse; *śiraḥ* - the head; *uṣaḥ* - (is) the dawn; *vai* - verily; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye; *sūryaḥ* - (is) the sun; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *vātaḥ* - (is) the air; *vyāttam* - the open (mouth); *vaiśvānaraḥagniḥ* - (is) the fire called *vaiśvānaraḥ*; *medhyasya* - sacrificial; *aśvasya ātmā* the horse's trunk; *samvatsaraḥ* - (is) the year; *pṛṣṭham* - the back; *dyauḥ* - (is) the heaven; *udaram* - the belly; *antarikṣam* - (is) the sky; *pājasyam (pādasyam)* - the hoof; *pṛthivī* - (is) the earth; *pārśve* - the flanks; *diśaḥ* - (are) the four directions; *pārśavaḥ* - the ribs; *avāntardiśaḥ* - (are) the intermediate directions; *aṅgāni* - the limbs; *ṛtavaḥ* - (are) the seasons; *parvāṇi* - the joints; *māsāḥ ca* - (are) the

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months; *ardhamāsāḥ* - the fortnights; *ca* - and; *pratiṣṭhāḥ* - the feet; *ahorātrāṇi* - (are) the days and nights; *asthīni* - the bones; *nakṣatrāṇi* - (are) the stars; *māṁsāni* - the flesh; *nabhaḥ*- (is) the clouds; *ūvadhyam* - its half digested food; *sikatāḥ* - (is) the sands; *gudāḥ* - blood vessels; *sindhavaḥ* - (are) the rivers; *yakṛt ca* - the liver; *klomānaḥ* - the spleen; *ca* - and; *parvatāḥ* - (are) the mountains; *lomāni* - the hairs; *oṣadhayaḥ* - herbs; *vanaspatayaḥ* - the trees; *ca* - and; *pūrvārdhaḥ* - the forepart; *udyan* - (is) the rising (sun) up to noon; *jaghanārdhaḥ* - the hind part; *nimlocan* - (is) the setting (sun) from noon on; *yat* - that (the horse); *vijṛmbhate* - yawns; *tat* - that; *vidyotate* - lightning; *yat* - that; *vidhūnute* - (it) shakes (its body); *tat* - that; *stanayati* - it thunders; *yat* - that; *mehati* - (it) makes water; *tat* - that; *varṣati* - it rains; *asya* - its; *vāk* - neighing; *eva* - indeed; *vāk* - (is) speech.

AUM. The head of the sacrificial horse is verily the dawn, the eye of the sacrificial horse is the sun, the vital force is the air, the open mouth the fire named *vaiśvānaraḥ*, the trunk the year, the back the heaven, the belly the sky, the hoof the earth, the flanks the four directions, the ribs the intermediate directions, the limbs the seasons, the joints the months and fortnights, the feet the days and nights, the bones the stars, the flesh the clouds, the half-digested food (in the stomach) is the sands, the blood vessels are the rivers, the liver and spleen the mountains, the hairs the herbs and trees, the forepart the rising sun, the hind part the setting sun. Its yawn is lightning, its shaking the body is thunder, its making water is rain, its neighing is indeed speech.

The *Upaniṣad* commences with *AUM*. *AUM* is the *praṇava*, signifying *catuṣpāda*, or the four limbs of the Absolute. This indicates that the *Upaniṣad* is not a delimited study. It is going to discuss in detail all four aspects of the science of the Absolute. The first aspect of *AUM*, represented by the letter *A*, is the transactional world in which we live as physical organisms and per-

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ceive its variegated forms to which we have assigned names for the purpose of identity. Our own organism is born of this world and it will be ultimately reabsorbed in its phenomenality. Any study has to proceed from the known to the unknown. It is this world which keeps us in the dark about many things and, paradoxically, it is the same world that is both intriguing and inspiring us to inquire into the truth of it. That inquiry is posed in the form of two questions "Whence this world?" and "Who am I?" Most of the transactions that take place between us and others in this world are mainly to procure the ends and means of our livelihood. The only philosophically valid transactions in which we can engage are when we try to discover the hidden truth of both the world and our own Self which can ultimately result in our Self-realization. It is these highly commendable transactions of inquiry which justify our purpose of living on earth as individuated beings.

The second aspect of *AUM*, represented by the letter *U*, is the subjective depth of all our experiences which takes us again and again from the gross to the subtle, from the perceptual to the conceptual, and from manifoldness to unity. From the point of view of this philosophy it is this aspect of the Absolute which provides our life with all its worthwhile pursuits. In fact all the dialogues through which we will be making our pilgrimage in the present *Upaniṣad* will keep us confined within the precincts of our subjective undertakings. One of the astounding things that we will soon notice is that the transactional world is a projected aspect of the subjective phenomena and for every perceptual objectivization in the phenomenal world there is a corresponding subjective reference. The transactional world needs the entire space of the cosmos and all of conceivable time for its totality. Surprisingly, we do not need anything more than the confines of our skull and its grey matter to which we can add as an appendix our sense organs and the spinal ganglia connected with our brain in order to subjectively conceive of such a voluminous world of quantifiable objectivity. Thus from a large area of immeasurable dimensions we go to a highly condensed system occupying an awkwardly negligent space of condensation.

The third aspect of *AUM* is a mystery which cannot be unravelled because of its primeval and causal nature. It can at best be only intuitively guessed or surmised from the dual phenomenal effect of the world and the mind which is holding in it a de-

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tailed and almost mathematically precise image of the world. This highly elusive aspect is represented by the letter *M* which does not permit any elaboration of a temporal, spatial, or conceptual detail. When we chant the mantra *AUM* our awareness converges into a zero-point and the energy to chant also comes to self extinction. But we can imagine a beyond. This refers to the infinitude of a ground which provides us with a canvas so extensive that we can spread out the entire science of the Absolute on it. Ultimately we will come to realize that the foundation of all sciences is based on the principle implied in the magic formula of *AUM*.

Uṣā vā aśvasya medhyasya śiraḥ: after the invocation the allegory of the horse is given. The head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn. The horse is qualified here as a horse that is to be sacrificed. This is the most intriguing statement that confronts us at the very outset of this study. The *Upaniṣads* come in the latter part of the *Vedas*. The background of this *Upaniṣad* is the *Yajur Veda*. Of the four *Vedas*, the *Yajur Veda* specifically pertains to Vedic ritual such as sacrifices, etc, especially the horse sacrifice which was mainly performed by kings to obtain regal supremacy over other kings. In the actual sacrifice that was performed as a ritual there was the literal beheading of a consecrated horse. In the present *Upaniṣad* all the ritualistic paraphernalia of a horse sacrifice including the regal ownership of the horse is abandoned and instead we hear the paradoxical statement that the head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn. The unusual presentation of a totally different scenario indicates that the subject to be dealt with in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is not a ritual at all.

The two major spiritual disciplines developed in India are *upāsana*, ritualistic worship, and *dhyāna*, contemplative meditation. In this very opening sentence we find that the rishi is asking his listeners to shift from the orthodox conventional ritual of worship to a more altruistic, philosophical, and gentle way of settling down to a meditation which is essentially based on universal empathy and the compassion that wells up in the heart of a lover of all beings. A preceptor who teaches the perennial wisdom of Upaniṣadic truth is called a *śrotriya*, one who is well-versed in the *śruti*. Śankara refers to the scriptural citations of ten major *Upaniṣads* which he specifically termed as the wisdom section, *jñāna kāṇḍa*. Indians are mainly confused in their discrimina-

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tion of *śruti* (original wisdom texts) and *smṛti* (books of obligatory religious conduct). In this matter even Śankara can be accused of precipitating confusion. Although Śankara quotes copiously from the *Bhagavad Gīta*, he refers to that authoritative book as *smṛti* instead of *śruti*. Following Śankara's example Rāmānuja and Madhva also refer to the *Gīta* as *smṛti*. At the same time they all honor the *Gīta* as one of the triple fundamental philosophical treatises of India. We can avoid that confusion by redefining *śruti* and *smṛti*. In fact, a similar classification was made by Emmanuel Kant when he classified wisdom into pure reason and practical reason. Further he distinguished the *a priori* to from the *a posteriori*. We can also adopt the same terms to indicate the difference between *śruti* and *smṛti*. The *śruti* refers to the *a priori* teaching of universal truth which never undergoes any change with reference to time, space, and the context to which the fundamental principles belong. The only reason that the *Gīta* is called a *smṛti* is because it is incorporated in the *Bhīṣma Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* which can only have the status of a *smṛti* because it is an epic retold.

When Jaimini and Bādarāyaṇa decided to present the Vedic teachings they were careful to adopt two entirely different literary styles and each one confined himself only to his respective field of rituals or knowledge. Jaimini presented the anterior critical inquiry of the *vedas* and Bādarāyaṇa strictly kept himself within the knowledge section that belonged to the *Upaniṣads*. Even before Bādarāyana made a transition of Vedic wisdom teaching from anterior critical inquiry *(pūrva mīmamsa)* to posterior critical inquiry *(uttara mīmamsa)*, the rishi of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* makes a clean break from ritualistic disciplines to a contemplative discipline with the simple statement that the head of the sacrificial horse was dawn. He also implies that we are now passing from the dark ages of *karma* which involved the unclean ritual of killing and causing bloodshed to the raising of our minds to a sublime height of meditation. Thus the head of the sacrificial horse brings us the promise of a new dawn, a new humanistic, or if you like, a more dignified divine resetting of the goal of human life.

The horse allegory is an ensemble of collective metaphors. Each metaphor has an intrinsic connection with another that constitutes the special placement of the horse, its structure and function in time. *Sūryaḥ cakṣuḥ*: after mentioning the head of

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the horse and its relationship with the dawn, another pair of metaphors are given which are interrelated. They are the sun in the firmament and the eye in the horse's head. Although technically, priority is given to the faculties of hearing and of touch in Vedānta, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* the act of seeing, using the sense organ of visual perception, the eye, is given first preference because of its power to bring a spectacular comprehensive image of the world in which we live. In the Genesis of the Old Testament also it is said that "God first desired for light to be. The light appeared and God found it good." Unlike the Semitic scripture, the *Upaniṣad*, as far as possible, gives philosophical conjecture rather than resorting to anthropomorphic images. Here the illuminating sun and the mirroring or imaging eye are presented as the active counterparts of visual experience. In the phenomenal world nothing is seen unless it is illuminated. This function is attributed primarily to the sun which is the illuminator of the universe. In Sanskrit that which illuminates is *dīpīka*. It is a self-luminous entity. Luminosity is called *dīpti*. *Dīpti* is an energy which can stimulate a living organism. Stimulation is called *uddīpana*. Thus the sun illuminates the world and the energy that goes into the eye brings stimulation or *uddīpana* to the eye. This is the physical half of the world revealing itself to a seeing person. The other half of the function comes from the seer's faculty of visual perception. When that faculty receives the incoming energy, it is disturbed. Disturbance is called *vedana*. As this slight painful disturbance given to the eye is beneficial in promoting sight, this *vedana* is qualified as *samvedana*, sensation. It is here we relate ourselves with the horse as an identical living being which is also roused by the light of the morning sun. The sun is called *sūryan* which means 'that which rouses'. As the sun comes again and again in twenty-four hours to rouse everyone around the world, it is also called *prasūran*.

There is a horse in us also which, when roused, becomes afflicted with a compulsion to act. If we watch the fingers and toes of people's hands and feet when they are sitting still, we can see that hardly anyone keeps his fingers or toes still. Our extremities are mostly restless; they are like horses ready to trot or gallop. Just as the horse has reins to restrain its movements, the discriminating intelligence in us restrains our inner unconscious and subconscious urges and promptings not to bring any compulsive actions. Once we wake up, the programs of the day open

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up before us. Almost immediately we have to nourish ourselves. One nourishment is autonomous, and the other is voluntary. Autonomously we nourish ourselves through breathing. If the horse gallops, it will start breathing hard. We can then see the horse dilating its nostrils and, in cold places, when the horse runs, it is as if it is fuming. Thick white mist comes through its nostrils. *Vātaḥ prāṇaḥ:* here we pass on from the metaphors of the eye and the sun to the metaphors of the act of breathing and the nourishing air that envelops our good earth. The very first throb of life we experience in our bodies and minds is the intake of vital breath. After a rhythmic pause, the outgoing breath happens. Thus respiration is the continuing sign of life, whether for horse or for all living beings on earth. The *Upaniṣad* builds up its theory by coordinating homogeneous principles. Just as the eye is coordinated with the sun, the respiring lungs are coordinated with the oxygenated fresh air of the atmosphere. The universal breathing is called *mātariśvan.*

Vyāttamagnirvaiśvānaraḥ: our voluntary nourishment comes from eating and drinking. Of all compulsions that can disturb a living being, the most basic is its hunger and thirst. The most primary vegetative need is hunger. In one of the popular icons of India we see the elephant-headed god *Gaṇeśa* holding a ball of sweetened rice in his hand and the little mouse on which the elephant god rides also holding in its tiny hand a similar ball of sweetened rice. In land animals the smallest is the mouse and the biggest is the elephant. For both of them the vegetative need is the same. Neither the mouse nor the elephant has to do any labour to find air to breathe. That is supplied by nature. But for food, every living being has to seek and find. We human beings also earn our bread by the sweat of our brows. Thus hunger suggests both desire and consequential labor. Desire is called *kāma* and labor is *karma.* Thirst and hunger are like unappeased or unquenched fire. As soon as they manifest they will assert their demand by creating the fire of consumption. As all beings in the universe are subjected to the fire of hunger and thirst, an open mouth is presented in the *Upaniṣad* as a symbol of hunger and its cosmological counterpart is mentioned as *vaiśvānaraḥ*, the hunger of the universal person. Thus we are given here the rousing of manifested beings to wake up and attend both to their automatic and voluntary functions which are specifically assigned to every limb of their biologic and psycholog-

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ic beings.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* opens with the schematic presentation of a wide canvas as the backdrop for a symbolic and contemplative *yajña*. The sacrifice that is proposed here is not to be conducted, but only to be imagined. It therefore refers to outer space in which our sun shines and controls everything belonging to the solar system. Although we human beings never experience either the rotation or revolution of the earth on which we live, we make inferences because of the alternation of day and night and the changing scenario of the constellations in the heavens. As the first reference here is to the cosmological macrocosm in which the earth is assigned a specific orbit to go around the sun, with this device our mind is taken to the furthest limits of awareness. For awhile we forget the here and now. The sun itself is a star that travels with its group of satellites, the planets. The planets in their turn have moons to carry around. The event that is focused on here is an incident in the galaxy to which the solar system belongs. This widens our consciousness to the largest expansion of space and time which the human mind can conceive. The movement of the earth around the sun is measured in terms of years *(samvatsaraḥ)*. *Samvatsaraḥ* is that period of time which is equitably divided into twelve months. The dawn that was referred to in the very beginning is a recurring symbol of cyclic significance. Just as the day has a dawn and a dusk, every fortnight has a beginning and an end. The year also has a beginning and an end. All these in a subtle way remind us that we earthlings, human beings, also have our birth and death. This is a grand way of helping us to imagine the macrocosm as a horse on which we are meant to ride.

This most expanded picture of the phenomenal world which we can project in our consciousness is a sheer fantasy generated by a generic error to which all minds are equally subjected. We can imagine how the earth, without any engine appended to it or fuel fed into it, and without a captain, like a wisp in the wind, is flying around the sun which itself is a minor star in a galaxy occupied by millions of giant stars. The earth looks so small, almost like a speck, not to be considered with any significance.

After humbling us by putting the earth in a niche of the stratosphere, the rishi brings us to a more familiar area, our own biosphere. We have a sky above and the solid earth below which is firm enough to give some sort of a sense of security to all its in-

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habitants. Even though the sun and the moon are far from the earth, we include them also in our home situation because we are very much affected by day and night. Although in the equatorial region there is some regularity in the day and night and the change of seasons, if you go to the north pole or south pole, days and nights become like fiction. In our case, day time and night time are almost equal and we resort to subjective activities in the night and more objective activities during the day. After presenting the aspect of life in which we encounter bodies belonging to outer space, we are brought a little closer to the daily encasement of our work situation and rest situation with a geophysical arrangement which gives us the orientation of east and west, north and south. This helps us to program our day; and the sequence of time and the placement of objects becomes more orderly and regular. We have a solar calendar and a lunar calendar. The rational apportionment of time, space, and motion takes over and we are given a recurring, repetitive schedule for our daily activities. This is presided over by the sun who comes to be with us from dawn to dusk. Then we have another kind of program which is set according to our lunar calendar with a full face to gladden us and a new moon which drags us to the negative side of darkness, causing dismay and depression.

Above us is the ethereal sky and below us are the down-to earth material facts out of which we have sprung and into which we will return. When the moon comes closer to our hearts, it is nice to imagine things, exaggerate certain values and devalue certain otherwise significant aspects of life. Instead of thinking of right and wrong, we are led to feelings of love and hate. Ultimately we have to take all these into consideration to assess the worthwhileness of this world to which we are holding on with great zest. Even when the world reminds us of its phenomenality and deception on many counts, it is not just the sun and the moon that govern our destiny. There are other forces of Saturn, Mars, Jupiter and Venus. Think of this tiny human creature, not bigger than a mammoth caterpillar, crawling here on earth and yet coming to be fondled or tortured by the heavenly bodies. What a curious interweaving of the microcosm and macrocosm is going on which has also very many secret interior worlds where microscopic beings have their fantastic occupations and operations.

This is the overall plan of the universal horse in whom we sit

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impatiently like the Spartans sitting in the belly of the Trojan horse. In world literature you may not find another literary device more fascinating than the sacrificial horse described in these lines of the *Upaniṣad*. A series of metaphors follows: the atmosphere is compared to the belly of the horse; the earth is strong and firm like the hooves; the four sides are the four directions; the ribs are intermediate directions; the seasons are the members. Its joints are the months and fortnights; its feet the days and nights; its bones the stars and its flesh the clouds; its half-digested food is the sand and its blood vessels the rivers; its liver and spleen are the mountains; its hairs are the herbs and trees. The body structure of the horse is compared to that part of our earth with which it has a certain anatomical unity. Some comparisons look apt while others are to be made fitting with our creative imagination. In all these metaphors physical entities correspond to mental images.

In Vedānta double allegories are given for the purpose of synthesizing constructs as well as anulling the imagination through an act of desymbolization and reduction. One of the favorite philosophical methods employed in Vedānta is the cancelling out of the pairs of opposites by which the contemplative can come to a neutral silence which is often called *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is a state of absorption in which the seer and seen are put together, which in its total effect amounts to nullifying the respective functions of seeing and being seen.

In an outward ritual of sacrifice there have to be many elaborate arrangements such as the drawing of geometrical figures to give the ground plan of the sacrifice. A central *agnihotra* pit is to be made with a meticulous formation of bricks. Just as in a football field, the participants in the burnt sacrifice are to be placed in a certain hierarchical order so that the master of ceremony can assign the participants their respective functions such as of the *yājamāna* nodding his permission for the *brāhmaṇa* to decide the appropriate time for the libation to be made, the mantra to be recited and the specially made cakes to be offered in the fire and distributed to the participants. All these are avoided in the present sacrifice where the situation is very similar to what is described in the *Bhagavad Gīta*, Chapter IV, Verse 24:

brahmārpaṇaṁ brahma havir brahmāgnau
brahmaṇā hutam. brahmaiva tena gantavyaṁ

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brahmakarmasamādhinā

For him the Absolute is the act of offering, the Absolute is the substance offered into the Absolute which is the fire offered by (him) the Absolute, the end to be reached by him being even the Absolute by means of his peace supreme of absolutist action.

This mantra reminds us of the final path discovered by Monkey in the great Chinese classic of the same name written by Wu Ch'eng-en. Monkey led his party to a river which was about nine leagues wide. (a league is three hundred and sixty steps). It was exceedingly swift and rough. No one was seen in any direction. While all the others in his party were disputing, Monkey alone jumped into the torrential current and reached the other side. Of course, in the last league, Monkey had to leave his body. Nobody reaches salvation carrying with him all the physical paraphernalia of the gross and subtle body, and all such filth accumulated in this world. Similarly, after putting together all the details of the cosmological world, of the microcosm and the cumulative psychophysical effect of all thoughts, words and actions that change into incipient memories, one has to leave them all behind remorselessly to reach the ultimate for which there is no comparison. Nothing is serious in this world. Both the construction and destruction are to be done in the spirit of a sport, *līla*.

After the details of the structure are given, certain functions are outlined. First the frontal half of the horse is described as the rising of the sun. The hind part is compared to the setting of the sun. The yawning of the horse is compared to lightening and the shaking of its body to thunder, its making water to raining, and its neighing to speech. Structure and function are complementary.

The last comparison involves *vāk*, speech or the Word. In the Semitic relgions creation begins with the Word. In this *Upaniṣad* the cessation of the sacrifice is depicted as the thundering voice of the horse. If you study the development of the embryo, from an almost invisible sperm and ovum to the maturing of a fetus, to a child and subsequent development in adolescence, youth and middle age, you will find a complementary regression which prepares the individual for his or her death. Thus we come to the close of the sacrifice without witnessing the horrid and unclean

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situations of an actual sacrifice. Instead we hear only the sound of the voice such as of *AUM* terminating in silence. It is so significant that this mantra begins with the *praṇava*, *AUM*, and culminates with the mention of *vāk* or Word.

Mantra 2

aharvā aśvam purastānmahimānvajāyata, tasya pūrve samudre yoniḥ; rātrirenam paścānmahimānvajāyata, tasyāpare samudre yoniḥ; etau vā aśvam mahimānāvabhitaḥ sambabhūvatuḥ. hayo bhūtvā devānavahat, vājī gandharvān, arvāsurān, aśvo manuṣyān; samudra evāsya bandhuḥ, samudro yoniḥ.

Word Meanings

ahaḥ- the day; *vai* - verily (is); *purastāt* - before; *mahimā*- the sacrificial vessel (golden cup) called *mahiman*; *aśvam*- the horse; *anvajāyata* - arose; *tasya* - its; *yoniḥ* - place (source); *pūrve samudre* - *(pūrvaḥ samudraḥ)* (is) the eastern sea; *rātriḥ* - the night; *paścāt* - behind; *mahimā* - the sacrificial vessel (silver cup); *enam* - it (the horse); *anvajāyata* - arose (in respect of); *tasya* - its; *yoniḥ* - source; *apare samudre* - (is) the western sea; *etau* - these two *vai* - verily; *mahānau* - cups called *mahiman*; *aśvam* - the horse; *abhitaḥ* - on both ends of; *sambabhūvatuḥ* - arose (appeared); *hayaḥ* - a steed; *bhūtvā* - becoming; *devān* - the gods; *avahat* - (it) carried; *vājī* - (as) a stallion; *gandharvān* - *gandharvas* (celestial minstrels); *arvā* - (as) a courser; *asurān* - the demons; *aśvaḥ* - (as) a horse; *manuṣyān* - humans; *samudraḥ* - the sea (is); *eva* - indeed; *asya* - its; *bandhuḥ* - relative; *samudraḥ* - the sea (is its); *yoniḥ* - place

Verily the day arose for the horse as the sacrificial vessel which stands before. Its place is the eastern sea. Verily the night arose as the sacrificial vessel which stands behind. Its place is the western sea. Verily these two arose

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on both ends of the horse as the two sacrificial vessels. Becoming a steed he carried the gods, a stallion, the *gandharvas*, a courser, the demons, a horse, humans. The sea indeed is his relative, the sea is his place.

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In the second mantra of the first *brāhmaṇa* further allegories are given to make the horse sacrifice more complete in its contemplative imagery. In the actual horse sacrifice it is customary to place a gold vessel in front of the sacrificial horse and a silver vessel behind it. The articles for sacrifice are usually kept in these vessels and they are both called *mahiman*. The *uṣas* or dawn that comes from the eastern sky is equated with the golden vessel placed in front of the horse. In the present imagery it is to be looked upon as the eastern sea because the sea is like a container. Similarly the *mahiman* behind the horse is equated with the night. This is said to be arising from the western sea. When dawn (*uṣas*) comes, the eastern sea gets a golden magenta hue and therefore it is appropriate to equate it with the golden vessel called *mahiman*. In the night the western sea which represents the hind sight of the sacrificial horse, reflects the silvery moon and therefore it can be compared to a silver bowl containing sacrifical articles.

पुस्तकालय
गुरुकुल कांगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय

The sea, whether eastern or western, is equated to the Supreme Self by the commentator Śankara. We propose an alternative to his commentary. As the horse is said to be bound to the sea, it is more appropriate to think of it as the sea of *samsāra*. The horse being a symbol of *karma*, it is more appropriate to relate it to the sea of phenomenality. There is little reason to think of the sea as the Supreme Self. The horse is well known for the part it plays in the strife, not only of human beings, but also of gods, gandharvas, and demons. The horse that carries the gods is called *haya*. The horse that carries the *gandharvas* is *vājī*. The horse that carries the demons is called *arvan*, and the horse that carries humans is called *aśva*. In the *purāṇas* (legends) we read of constant fights between the demons, celestial beings, and human beings. The chief instrument for carrying out fights is the horse. Another discrepancy in Śankara's commentary can be noticed in his attempt to make the horse a pure being born of the womb of the Absolute. There is no reason to think that the horse, which is an intimate and insepar-

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able part of the *karma* of fighting feuds, whether divine, human, or demonic, can be absolved from the cruel *karma* of war and killing.

The commentaries on the scriptures have been vitiated by the highly prejudicial interests of the commentators to uphold one school against another school. This is an epistemological and methodological problem which we find creeping into inter-disciplinary studies. The *karma kāṇḍa* of the *Veda*, with its *vidhi* (sacred precepts) and *niṣedha* (prohibitions), has an ontology which has its own frame of reference. When the same was brought over to the epistemological appraisal of Vedānta, confusion arose in the minds of the commentators. When two systems with different frames of reference are to be correlated and coordinated, it is essential to evolve a common epistemology into which the *Veda* and Vedānta can be juxtaposed.

Similarly, the methodology applied in Vedānta does not suit a closed system such as of Vedic rituals. The axiology of Vedic rituals points towards heaven *(svarga)*. On the other hand, the axiology of Vedānta is liberation *(mokṣa)* and not heaven. Therefore the ritualistic *karma kāṇḍa* and the contemplative Vedānta are to be reduced to a common wisdom reference before they are related in order to yield any philosophical result. Although Śankara attempted to make philosophy as rational as possible, his own orthodox prejudices prevented him from evolving a full-fledged science of philosophy. Without a common normative notion, philosophy cannot give a certitude that is on par with the universal norms of science. Just as in western philosophy, after centuries of disputation, the science of philosophy and a philosophy of science have finally been formulated, we have to make the same kind of coordination between science and philosophy in India also. Otherwise, as Will Durant angrily says in his *Story of Civilization*, the wisdom texts of the *Upaniṣads* can sound childish and puerile.

We are not commenting on the *Upaniṣads* with any special interest or with the intention of grinding any axe. All through the text of this and other *Upaniṣads* we may have to disagree with the pioneers who have otherwise done a great service to the cause of the *Upaniṣads*.

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Brāhmaṇa 2

Mantra 1

nalveha kiñcanāgra āsīt, mṛtyunalvedamāvṛtamāsīt-aśanāyayā, aśanāyā hi mṛtyuḥ; tanmano'kuruta, ātmanvī syāmiti. so'rcannacarat, tasyārcata āpo'jayanta; arcate vai me kamabhūditi, tadevārkasyārkatvam; kam ha vā asmai bhavati ya evametadarkasyārkatvam veda.

Word Meanings

agre - in the beginning; *iha* - here; *kiñcana* - anything; *na eva* - nothing; *āsīt* - there was; *idam* - this; *aśnāyayā* - by hunger; *mṛtyunā* - by death *(hiraṇyagarbha); eva* - alone; *āvṛtam* -covered; *āsīt* - was; *aśanāyā* - hunger (is); *hi* - for; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *ātmanvī* - have a mind; *syām* - thought; *iti* - this;[1] *sah* - he (death); *tat* - that; *manaḥ* - mind; *akuruta* - created; *saḥ* - he; *arcan* - worshipping (himself); *acarat* - moved about; *arcataḥ tasya* - as he was worshipping; *āpaḥ*- water; *ajāyanta*- was produced; *arcate me* - (he thought) as I was worshipping; *kam* - water; *vai* - verily; *abhūt* - sprang up; *iti tat* - from that; *eva* - therefore; *arkasya* - of *arka* (of fire); *arkatvam* - the reason of being called *arka* (arises); *yaḥ* - (one) who; *evam* - thus; *arkasya* - of fire; *etat* - this; *arkatvam* - reason of being called *arka; veda* - knows; *asmai* - for him; *kam* - water (or happiness); *ha vai* - surely; *bhavati* - comes

There was nothing whatever here in the beginning. It was covered with death *(hiraṇyagarbha)* or hunger, for hunger is death. He created the mind, thinking, "Let me have a mind." He moved about worshipping himself. As

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he was worshipping, water was produced. (He thought:) "As I was worshipping, water sprang up, therefore *arka* (fire) is so called." Water or happiness surely comes to one who knows how fire came to have this name of *arka*.

The most basic question that inspires a person to initiate a philosophical quest is, "Whence this world?" or "From what did this world come?" The same question can be posed as, "What is the first cause?" When you elaborate the first cause it reveals not only the primeval cause but also the reason that necessitates the cause. In fact, the cause is stated by stringing the reason in a convincing manner. Here it is said that the first cause of this world is fear. This statement implies in it a veiled necessity. Fear is a response to imminent danger. It is the imperativeness of an imminent danger that necessitates a deeper consideration of the fear-filled situation. The gravest of all dangers that one can think of is death. If fear is the first cause of everything, that shows that the possibility of death stimulates fear in us.

Fear never comes alone. It is a negative force which has a positive counterpart. That counterpart is hope. A fear-stricken person does not essentially concentrate on the direction in which fear comes. He or she automatically looks into other directions, hopefully expecting to find an unknown benevolence mysteriously or miraculously appearing with a promise. Fear naturally brings in its train of association the idea of darkness, uncertainty, a contentless vacuum which may suck the fear-tormented person into it. The fear is like a mouth burning with hunger. When hunger and its positive counterpart, nourishment or food, are bracketed together, we get the symbol of the most superactive principle of generation with which the world commences. It is called *hiraṇyagarbha*. *Hiraṇya* is the golden hue which symbolizes the delight that accompanies hope. Before the sun appears, the eastern sky gets a crimson hue. That indicates that the oriental sky is already pregnant with the golden sun. Hence in this mantra, death is equated with hunger and hunger in its turn is suggested to be none other than *hiraṇyagarbha*.

The best example of *hiraṇyagarbha* is the legendary golden egg. The egg has within it a thesis and an antithesis. The thesis is the enveloping mass of the yolk that is seen in an egg. The antithesis is the sperm which sits as a nucleus in the center of the

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yolk. It is hard to say whether the yolk is primeval or the nucleus is primeval. In all dialectical counterparts the polarized opposites have a simultaneity in their origin and a binary interaction between them. In the case of an egg which has the program to hatch, it has the nucleus which is quantitatively far less than that of the yolk. And yet, the nucleus which is unicellular increases its hunger and the hunger is its dynamic to eat or absorb into it more and more of the yolk. Thus, qualitatively, the nucleus is superior to the voluminous yolk and the consequential synthesis changes the nucleus into a growing chicken whose enjoyment of its feeding is continuously promulgated by its hunger. Ultimately the shell cannot contain the nucleus any longer. The shell breaks. The whole process of generation is one of the solitary act of self-beneficience.

We never realize that our parents were only incidental in kicking off the ball of our lives into the game of our self-creation. From the moment of the fertilization of the egg, the person gets into his or her solitary field and thereafter the future of the person is decided as if it has a mind - an unconscious mind if you like. It is as if we have planned our ears, eyes, nostrils, the quarternion of our heart, our binary lungs and our twin kidneys. It is as if we are afraid that in the long run the human machine would not be able to function with a single engine. Even that suggests fear and hope. Without heat, the egg in the mother's womb cannot be licked into shape and cooked into a person. Every effort brings the water of perspiration. True effort brings not cold perspiration, but water produced by heat. Hence the solitary effort of the first person is described as a self-worshipping enterprise which simultaneously brought the fire of generation and the water of sustenance. The moral of the story is that if we are hopeful and purposive in our programming of life we will be aided by an actively and elaborately reasoning mind that can conceive of devices to equip us to tide over the gaping mouth of death.

Thus, necessity becomes identified with the imminent fear of death which is hurrying towards us from all directions. Necessity is the mother of invention. We invent and create adequate supplies to meet the demands of death. Nobody can live in this world without provisions. Hence we call God Providence - the benevolence that provides. Jesus was quick in noticing benevolence enveloping everything which is otherwise seen only as the fear-

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some death which envelops everything from the beginning. That is why Jesus reminded his disciples of a divine compassion that is there to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. He said, "Are you troubled with the thought of what you will eat tomorrow? Have no such fear. Look at the fowls of the air, they do not sow, nor gather grain in their barns, and yet their heavenly Father looks after them. Are you troubled about what you will wear tomorow? Look at the lily of the field, it is attired with a cloth more beautiful that that of Solomon." On one side we have ever-demanding death, and on the other side the generous shower of grace which comes on the condition that you apply your right reason and make your expected effort. In the closing mantra of the first *brāhmaṇa* the fire to burn away the horse should have been presented. Instead that fire is presented in this mantra as a fire of beneficience which brings the life-giving sap of the water of happiness. This transformation of symbols shows the transcendence which can douse the scorching fire of *samsāra* with the aid of right knowledge.

The *Daiva Daśakam* of Narayana Guru commences with the words of a supplicant, frightened to his bones, praying for the word of God to be his mighty steamship that can take him beyond the sea of suffering. Then Guru, like Jesus Christ, makes the supplicant announce his gratitude to Providence which feeds him every day and also clothes him. After referring to the contingencies that can compensate for the necessities, the sea of *samsāra* is revised and restated as the sea of knowledge, *samvit sāgara*. In that, Guru brings, like the Cartesian coordinates, the vertico-horizontal scheme of wisdom apperception.

Such should be the lesson we should draw from the perennial teaching of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. Even Karl Marx was cognizant of the fact that the first urgency in life is to observe the all-necessitating hunger which is like a wolf at the doors of living beings. No need is more urgent than that for food. That is why, both in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, food, *(anna)* is given primary recognition. If the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* is the first manifesto of communism, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is the first manifesto of economic science.

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Mantra 2

āpo vā arkaḥ; tadyadapām śara asīttatsamahanyata. sā pṛthivyabhavat, tasyāmāśrāmyat; tasya śrāntasya taptasya tejoraso niravartatāgniḥ.

Word Meanings

āpaḥ - water; *vai* - verily; *arkaḥ* - (is) *arka*; *tat* - there; *yat* - what; *apām* - (on the) water; *śaraḥ* - (like) froth; *āsīt* - was; *tat* - that ; *samahanyata* - solidified; *sā* - became; *pṛthivī* - earth; *abhavat* - (and) became; *tasyām* - when that (earth was produced); *aśrāmyat* - (he) was tired; *śrāntasya* - fatigued; *taptasya* - (and) distressed; *tasya* - of him; *tejaḥ rasaḥ* - essence (or luster); *niravartata* - came forth; *agniḥ* - (this was) fire

Water verily is *arka*. What was there like froth on the water was solidified and became this earth. When that was produced, he was tired. (While he was thus tired and distressed), his essence or luster came forth. This was fire.

As we pass on to the second *brāhmaṇa* we enter into a new field of Vedāntic speculation which is at variance with the Vedic concept of divinity. We get a kind of warning in the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛg Veda* that the deified nature forces such as *agni, marut, rudra, āditya, pūṣan, uṣas*, etc., will not remain eternally to be worshipped and eulogized. This indication comes from the concept of the Cosmic Person from whom the four-fold psychological classifications called *varṇas* are made in the *Ṛg Veda*. It was as if in the camp of the Vedic ritualists there were already a few contemplatives who were not quite pleased with the proliferation of divinities which had reached an unimaginable number of 33,333 gods. Now we see a positive and radical unification of all the gods into a single divinity. First it was presented as a Cosmic Egg, the *hiraṇyagarbha*, which contained within it the bipolar entities of hunger as death and *prajāpati* which acts

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as mind to formulate a synthetic person in which there is both hunger and the enjoyer of food. With the presentation of such a unified scheme the *Upaniṣad* makes the worshipper and the worshipped the same. Thus, the mode of *upāsana* or propitiation through offerings and sacrifice is reduced to a self-exertion to achieve further evolution. A classical Vedāntin may not like the reference to evolution because he wants to stand firm with his theory of superimposition and *māyā*. It is exactly here that both Rāmānuja and Madhva depart from the non-dualistic philosophy of Śankara.

Śankara can justify his stand by citing the first principle of creation as the negation of *sat*. This is referred to in the opening chapter of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. But the second *brāhmaṇa* presents the creation myth systematically in a graded manner, beginning with water which is said to be the essence of effort. Unlike the prophets of the Old Testament, the rishes of the *Upaniṣads* do not attribute any supernatural power to the principle of creation. Although, because of the inadequacy of the language, they use the third person singular, "he," there is no anthropomorphization in this concept, and no praise is wasted on that principle in conceiving it to be the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God. The process is viewed with a common sense perspective of the first cause having similarities to whatever can cause a person to look for remedial measures when confronted by death. In such a situation a person is likely to gather all one's strength and put up a valiant effort to escape. The figurative language of the *Upaniśads* grants the rishi the freedom to conceive the original principle of creation to be somewhat like an intelligent person standing face to face with the imminent danger of death. The whole system becoming permeated with an energy which makes it hot is seen here as an initial state. That helps the rishi to establish the three basic elements of creation: earth, water, and fire. The order in which the rishi brings them forth is first water, then the curdling of the liquid into earth, and finally the heat going out of the mass as radiant thermal energy. If we study the evolution of the universe from the nebula that goes in circles with great energy and finally becomes a burning fireball, which itself produces moisture to cool it, our rishis are not far from the theories of the astrophysicist and the geologist.

Even now there is molten lava continuously boiling in the belly of the earth, and it is surprising that the earth has a hard

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crust with oceans around it and also snow-peaked mountains. Thus we can see the rishi of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is down to earth in the honesty and integrity of his search. He does not create any phantom who can, like a wizard, order forth creation as we see in the Semitic books. In the very physical body of earth which is meant to be a nursery of biologic manifestation, the rishi brings fire, earth and water as the main components of the alchemy of creation.

Only after standardizing the basics does the *Upaniṣad* introduce four creative forces with equal status: *vaiśvānara*, the cosmic hunger; *prajāpati*, the cosmic nourisher; *hiraṇyagarbha*, the perennial model for specific proliferation; and *virāj*, the universal regulator and controller which is destined ultimately to be the overseeing god *(īśvara)*, of whom the triple forces are that of the Creator, the Preserver and the Dissolver. Thus, without resorting to any cock and bull story, the Indian rishis have succeeded in giving a creation myth. Yes, of course, it is a myth, myth being the deepest wisdom resource preserved in the collective unconscious with its archetypes. Even the tiniest of beings, such as a bacteria or virus, shows in its behavior the archetypal modes of fearing death, fighting it, gathering strength and preserving its identity, to the extent that it can multiply and immortalize itself before its physical mode is dissolved.

Mantra 3

sa tredhātmānam vyakuruta, ādityam tṛtīyam, vāyum trtīyam; sa eṣa prāṇastredhā vihitaḥ. tasya prāci dik śiraḥ, asau cāsau cermau. athāsya pratīcī dik puccham, asau cāsau ca sakthyau, dakṣiṇa codīcī ca parśve, dyauḥ pṛṣṭham, antarīkṣmudaram; iyamuraḥ, sa eṣo'psu pratiṣṭhitaḥ; yatra kva caiti tadeva pratitiṣṭhatyevam vidvān.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *ātmānam* - his body; *tredha* - in three ways; *vyakuruta* - divided; *ādityam* - the sun; *trṛīyam* - as a third; *vāyum* - air; *trtīyam* - as a third; *saḥ* - that ; *eṣaḥ* - this; *prāṇaḥ* - *prāṇa* (the cosmic vital force,

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hiraṇyagarbha); tredhā - in three ways; *vihitaḥ* - is transformed; *tasya* - his (of *virāj* as fire); *śiraḥ* head (is); *prācī* - the eastern; *dik* - direction; *īrmau* - (his) forelimbs; *asau ca asau ca* - (are) this and this (northeast and southeast); *atha* - again; *asya* - his; *puccham* - tail (is); *pratīcī* - the western; *dik* - direction; *sakthau* - (his) two hip-bones; *asau ca asau ca* - this and this (northwest and southwest); *pārśve* - (his) two flanks; *dakṣiṇa ca* (are) the south; *udīcī* - the north; *ca* - and; *pṛṣṭham* - (his) back; *dyauḥ* - (is) heaven; *udaram* - (his) belly; *antarikṣam* - (is) the sky; *uraḥ* - (his) breast (is); *iyam* - this (earth); *saḥ eṣaḥ* - he; *apsu* - in water; *pratiṣṭhitaḥ* - is established; *evam* - thus; *vidvān* - he who knows; *yatra kva ca* - wherever; *eti* - goes; *tat eva* - there itself; *pratitiṣṭhati* - stands firm

He divided his body in three ways, making the sun as a third, air as a third (and fire as a third). So this *prāṇa* is transformed in three ways. His head is the eastern direction. His forelimbs are the northeast and southeast, his tail is the western direction, and his two hip bones are the northwest and southwest, his two flanks the south and the north, his back is heaven, his belly the sky, and his breast this earth. He is established in water. He who knows this stands firm wherever he goes.

During the Vedic period, poetry, music, and ritualism were developed and combined into a single discipline. Ritualistic offerings were made to gods. The offerings were preceded by praises which were essentially poetic. Thus some of India's best poems flourished during the Vedic period, and the *Ṛg Veda* is probably the first recorded poetry of India. The same mantras that appear in the *Ṛg Veda* are tuned to a musical meter in the *Sāma Veda*. The rituals developed symbols based on the Vedic myth. Some of the earlier *Upaniṣads* were also composed in a poetic form. This *Upaniṣad* is in the form of prose dialogue. The opening *brāhmaṇa* has no scope for dialogue because it presents the creation myth. In the transition from the *Vedas* to the *Upaniṣads*, particularly the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, a valiant attempt is made to systematize a

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philosophy of life in which there is poetic imagination, mythical symbols, and reduction of the pluralities of vision into a unitive concept.

In a learning context the focus of interest should be on the person who is placed as a central figure to cogitate, connate, and evaluate. Only when that person is put into a field of knowledge can he or she assume the role of the knower of the field. The field delimited for observation, study, and interaction is the *kṣetra*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* the *kṣetra* chosen for study is the entire universe which is experienced as the phenomenal world. It also includes the world of imaginative possibilities that a dreamer, a poet, a creative artist, a philosopher, and a mystic can conceive. It encompasses the unfathomed depth of the unconscious and the infinitude of existence. These three aspects are bracketed as we saw in the three letters of the *praṇava, A, U, M*. An indescribable and unnameable fourth order of reality is conceived to be the ground or foundation of the chosen field of study. After the field is presented, it is described as having no physical substantiation which can claim the status of a thing. Hence it is described as 'no-thing', and yet the 'no-thing' envelops the unknown as death. Thus, the very first approach given to the field is from a vertical negative pole commencing with hunger as an alpha point. If hunger marks the alpha, at the omega is appeasement. The omega is presented as *prajāpati*. A vertical positive character attributed to hunger in its personification as universal hunger or hunger of the universal person, *vaiśvānara agni*. The vertical flame of *vaiśvānara agni* makes hunger a constant and continuing principle co-extensive with beginningless time.

Hunger is a universal phenomena. Even if a person eats or drinks, when that is burnt away as fuel, or digested, the person will again feel hungry. Thus hunger and appeasement become a constant. Just as the first approach to the field is made from the negative pole, to present the knowledge situation the action or interaction context also commences with the demand made by hunger and life emerging to fill in the vacuum. It is paradoxical that death begets life which is then consumed by death. Death is not final: recurring hunger creates the need for recurring manifestations of life to appease it. Creation is well initiated with the dialectical polarities of death and life. Consequently both death and life are presented from the beginning as terminable. The

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Sanskrit name for death is *yama*, which means 'a pause', and the word for life is *āyus*, which means 'that which will come to a termination'. This is very much like a *vīṇā* player putting tension on a string and then releasing it. He is releasing it only to put tension on another string which will automatically be released. The effect is music. Similarly the music of creation commences with the threatening demand of death (tension) and the consequential manifestation of life (release). Life manifests as a corporeal body called *prajā*. As bodies appear and dissolve, it became necessary to think of a manipulator. Hence the Lord of the *prajā* was conceived and called *prajāpati*. *Prajāpati* is not to be looked upon as an outside factor. It is an inner controlling and governing principle and hence is immanent.

The bracketed field is mythically symbolized as an egg. In the first *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter the whole cosmos was symbolized by a horse. In the second *brāhmaṇa* the same symbol is reduced to occupy the field which consists essentially of the biologic world. The outside factors, such as outer space, atmosphere, sun, air, fire, water and earth, are included in the revised symbol of the horse. The light of knowledge comes from the east. So in the schematic presentation conceived for putting the student on the track of truth, orientation is given by stating that the front part of the horse is east and the hind part is west. The front limbs are located to represent northeast and southeast. Similarly, the hind legs are designated as symbolizing the northwest and southwest. That automatically makes the two sides of the horse north and south respectively. The back of the horse is presented as heaven, or outer space, and the belly of the horse represents the biosphere or the sky in which we live and move about. The horse rests on water. The eye of the horse which represents the sun is further divided into two: air *(vāyu)* and fire *(agni)*.

Along with the descriptive presentation of the symbol to give us orientation, a structural correlation of the symbol is given in detail so that we can relate function with its corresponding structure, such as the eye to see light, the nostril to breathe the *prāṇa*, and the belly to have the digestive fire. Work brings perspiration first, indicating that the water element in us is heated up until it comes in the form of liquified vapor (sweat). From that point the functions of the body are to be brought to rest. These details were all given in the previous mantra: how *prajāpati*

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found water being produced when he was engaged in self-worship, how he recognized water as born of fire and named it *arka*, and how, when he rested, the heat in the water came off and was recognized as fire.

In the present symbol we get a vivid idea of the systematization of both the macrocosm and microcosm, first structurally and then functionally. The rishi initiates a system science giving all its basics in a perfect order. We already mentioned that in the first mantra of the second *brāhmaṇa* indications are given of the possible conception of a theory of economics. To an intelligent student who grasps the methodological development of the *Upaniṣad*, it is clear that it will take a long time for us to catch up with the foundations of the Science of the Absolute *(brahmavidyā)* from which we have taken fragments to develop sciences of the physical world first, then of the psychophysical world, and, after a long pause, sciences of life and consciousness.

System Science

We can begin with the central focus of our consciousness where we identify our personal self or ego as the center of one system. 'I' or 'I am' marks the center of that system and consists of cognition, connation and affection. In cognition there is subject and object. Connation is taking the subjective aspect of what we cognize and then looking into it for attributes which can be mentally pictured. Those attributes are then given to the object. So we properly affix a subjective phenomena to an objective ground and are affected by it. We have divided our thinking process into logic, ethics and aesthetics. That is, in the volitional aspect, we think, we act and we enjoy. Thinking becomes one system, doing or the volitional aspect becomes another system and the affective aspect of values becomes the third system.

We are placed in this world which is a terrestrial system with the sea and dry land. There is depth in the ocean and height in the mountains. There are life forms in both. There are arid deserts as well as thick forests. We think of the vegetative world and the animal world, and among animals we think of a human being as a separate entity who has the capacity to reason. The earth has the terrestrial plane, an atmosphere and then the

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stratosphere. As we move from the terrestrial plane to the atmosphere and then to the stratosphere, we meet the sun and other planets. So we make another system and call it the solar system. We also have the psychologic system, the psychobiologic system and the biologic system.

Then we have the biospheric system. We also see that the sun itself is at the periphery of the galaxy and we make a galactical system. Thus we have to structure all systems in our own world. Around our personal egos we have the biologic and physiologic systems. We have to include other people and so we add system upon system to the central nucleus of the ego. But as we pass on from one system to another system, the system that was considered central becomes pushed to the periphery until, finally, we human beings are just nobodys, helpless earthlings, and the most central position is given to the sun and its great laws. Then the sun itself is pushed to the periphery of the galactical system which is a mammoth system of which we know less and less. From there, as we return closer and closer to ourselves, we know more and more. So there is definite knowledge and indefinite knowledge, certitude and lack of certitude. This is how the whole universe is laid out around our consciousness.

In the present mantra, the intention of the creator, the material of creation, and the process of creation are given. In his universal prayer Narayana Guru makes the creator *(sṛṣṭa)* gain that status from creation *(sṛṣṭī)*. Through the act of creation, the creator gets its status. It is not first a creator. Nobody is a father before his child is born; it is only by creating a child that a man becomes a father. Similarly, it is only from the creation that the creator comes.

To create, two things are needed. One is something to fashion (the material), and the other is the scheme of fashioning. That is why the rishi says that first *prajāpati* decided to have a mind. Mind is the scheme. And it is according to the scheme that the creator fashioned. Fashioned what? Itself! Narayana Guru says that the creator was also the material *(sāmagrī)* for creation. The essence of the creator is water. Out of water a crust formed which became the earth. The energy that was making it up became fire.

In the next *brāhmaṇa* we are going to see how that fire was divided into three. Instead of four we always find a three and a one. For instance, when we say *AUM*, followed by silence, *A, U*

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and *M*, are the three *bhāvatrayas*, *jāgrat*, *svapna* and *suṣupti*. What is beyond the *bhāvas* is *turīya*. It is not named, but simply called "the fourth." These are some of the points we have to keep in our mind to fully understand the rishi.

Mantra 4 .

so'kāmayata, dvitīyo ma ātmā jāyeteti; sa manasā vācam mithunam samabhavadaśanāyā mṛtyuḥ, tadyadreta āsītsa samvatsaro'bhavat. na ha purā tataḥ samvatsara āsa; tametāvantam kālamabibhaḥ. yāvānsamvatsaraḥ; tametāvataḥ kālasya parastādasṛajata. tam jātamabhivyādadāt; sa bhāṇakarot, saiva vāgabhavat.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *akāmayata* - desired; *me* - of me ; *dvitīyaḥ* -(a) second; *ātmā* - self; *jāyeta* - be produced *iti*; *saḥ* - he; *aśanāyā* - hunger; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *manasā* - by mind; *vācam* - speech; *mithunam samabhavat* - copulated with; *tat* - that; *yat* - which; *retaḥ* - seed; *āsīt* - was; *saḥ* - that; *samvatsaraḥ* - the year *(virāj)*; *abhavat* - became; *tataḥ purā* - previous to that; *samvatsaraḥ* - year; *na ha* - no; *āsa* - *there was*; *tam* - (he bore) him; *yāvān* - as long as; *samvatsaraḥ* - a year; *etāvantam kālam* - for a time; ;*abibhaḥ* - (nourished) (bore); *etāvataḥ* - (that) long; *kālasya* - time; *parastāt* - after; *tam* - him; *asrajata* - (he) brought him forth; *jātam* - (when he was) born; *tam* - he (death); *abhivyādadāt* - decided to eat the progeny; *saḥ* - the new born; *bhāṇ* - (the sound) *`bhāṇ'*; *akarot* - protested ; *sā* - that; *eva* - indeed; *vāk* - speech; *abhavat* - became

He desired: "Would that a second self of me were produced." Death (hunger) by mind copulated with speech *(vāk)*. That which was the seed became the year. Previous to that there was no year. He bore him for a time as long as a year. After that long time he brought him forth.

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When he was born, Death *(prajāpati)* decided to eat the progeny. The new-born protested '*bhāṇ.*' That indeed, became speech.

What is very beautiful about the Upaniṣadic rishi is his utmost simplicity in presenting even the most difficult thought by making it have its bearing on our everyday experience. One of our first experiences is the paradoxical cognition of non-existence. In his *Nyāya* aphorisms, Gotama recognizes *abhāva* or non-existence as the eighth category. When we come into the world the very first thing we experience is hunger. We are hungry when there is nothing to sustain us, i.e., when we have no nourishment. We experience a vacuum. To living beings all over the world the acutest pain is hunger. The rishi begins with that. This first vital need comes as a compulsion to think. Nobody can think without a string of words to reason with. Words do not come in a cluster. They come one by one. Thus hunger becomes a generator. It generates words. Thinking is with the conjunction of a word with its meaning. That is an act of union. The rishi is a man of simple common sense. So he uses the most familiar allegory of union to give an accurate picture of what precisely happens when hunger transforms into reasoning. He compares it to the cohabitation of a man with his wife when he desires to produce a progeny. In the present case the progeny is to be sacrificed. Nietzsche points out that all religions speak of triple sacrifices. The first is the sacrifice of whatever is most dear to the person which appears to Nietzsche nothing short of self-immolation. The second is the sacrifice of one's freedom whereby one gives some reason to substitute it with faith. The third is the sacrifice of one's nature. Nietzsche's mind is prone to the exaggeration which the Christian religion gives to celibacy or continence.

Although we find sacrifice as a major preoccupation of the Vedic brahmin also, even Nietzsche will be astonished to note that the rishi of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* commences his creation myth not with a sacrifice of oneself, but with a device to appease hunger. It is said here, "He desired, 'Let me have a second form'." The "he" mentioned here is not a person in the third person singular. It is death or hunger. In either case the reference is to non-existence. But as a literary device in the mode of

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writing prevalent in those days, the rishi says that 'he" brought about the union of speech with the mind: *sa manasā vācam mithunam samabhavadaśanāyā mṛtyum.*

St. John's Gospel commences with the saying, "In the beginning was the word." In the *Upaniṣad* we find that the word comes only after mentioning the imperative need for the word to occur. That need is the danger of annihilation if one does not think. Thus the *Upaniṣad* makes the word consequential and the primary cause is hunger. Nothing is more natural than for a person to have a problem *prima facie* to think about. That is why we say that the Upaniṣadic rishi presents the problem in its most natural setting. The mind churning a word to get the essence of it is allegorically compared to a couple entering into active cohabitation. The consummation of love has a beginning and it comes to a close with the depletion of energy which happens with the emission of the semen.

According to Heidegger a desire is an energy-filled package. The consummation of a desire is to maximize the energy and then release it. Heidegger calls it the total depletion of the energy of the package. The rishi says, "What was the seed, then became the year *(virāj)*." The couple waits for a year to be profited by their union. Hardly any woman recognizes immediately after consummation that she has conceived. She recognizes her progeny as a secret that is happening in a hidden part of her own concealed body. Hence the *Upaniṣad* says, "What is conceived is maintained over a period until the essence of it projects itself as the newborn. In most religions the new-born is sacrificed to the God of that religion. Strangely, in the present case, the progenitor of the baby, like Kronos, wants to swallow it. With that intention, when death opens its mouth to eat the progeny born of mind and word, the baby protests and cries out, *"bhāṇ!"*

No commentator has taken the trouble to reveal the meaning of *bhāṇ*. *Bhān* is an onomatopoeic word imitating the sound of hissing or breathing, often used to chastise. The immediate reaction is to withdraw as if a cobra is charging at you. *Ph* is related to *bh* in Sanskrit. The hood of a cobra is called *phāṇa* and therefore the snake is called *phaṇi*. The male organ is symbolized as a snake. The female genital is like a hole into which the snake goes and finds its pleasurable nest. Hence the most popular icon of India is the conjunction of the male organ with the female genital. The male organ paradoxically represents both death and the

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longevity of life. A dead person's return with another new body is compared to a snake sloughing off its old skin and reappearing with a fresh skin of new scales.

These symbols are taken from India's most ancient myths. The protest of the new offspring suggests that life recovers itself from imminent death by proliferating individuation (*prajanam*) into many. This process is also called *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is defined as *prakarṣeṇa karotīti prakṛti*. *Prakarṣeṇa* means properly and abundantly. *Karotīti* means an accomplishing. What is accomplished is the replication of individuation in such a recurring manner that it can never be ultimately exhausted. The sperm from a male joins the egg of the female to make a repetitive model of all beings which have continued up to the present day through generations of procreation. For this reason, matter in India is not considered to be just inertial elements, but procreative matter.

By not referring to a stereotyped God who performs a magical creation of the world, the rishi has accomplished his task without resorting to anthropomorphic agents. Only nature is allegorically alluded to here. As human beings are one of the specialized outcomes of nature, what truly belongs to nature can be seen in them also. The ingenuity of the Upaniṣadic author should not be slighted. The arguments are fashioned out of the everyday occurrence of nature so there is no departure from reality in the presentation of this myth. A myth is credited with value when it presents an explanation that can adequately account for the events that are taken for interpretation.

Mantra 5

sa ekṣat, yadi vā imamabhimamsye, kanīyo'nnam karisya iti; sa tayā vācā tenātmanedam sarvamasṛjata yadidam kiñca ṛco yajūmṣi sāmāni chandāmsi yajñān prajāḥ paśūn. sa yadyadevāsṛjata tattadattumadhriyata; sarvam vā attīti tadaditeradititvam; sarvasyaitasyāttā bhavati, sarvamasyānnam bhavati, ya evametadaditeradititvam veda.

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Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *ekṣat* - reflected; *yadi* - if; *vai* - perchance; *imam* - him; *abhimamsye* - (I) kill; *kanīyaḥ* - but little; *annam* - food; *karisye* - (I) shall make *iti*; *saḥ* - he; *tayā vācā* - through that speech; *tena ātmanā* - (and) through that mind; *yat kiṁca idam* - whatever there is-- *ṛcaḥ* - the *ṛces; yajūmṣi* - the *yajuṣes; sāmāni* - the *sāmans; chandāmsi* - the meters; *yajñān* - the sacrifices; *prajāḥ* - people; *paśūn* - (and) animals; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *asṛjata* - created. *saḥ* - he; *yat yat eva* - whatsoever; *asṛjata* - created; *tat tat* - all that; *attum* - to devour; *adhriyata* - (he) resolved; *sarvam* - all; *vai* - verily; *atti* - (he) devours; *iti* - that; *tat* - hence; *aditeḥ* of *aditi (hiraṇyagarbha); adititvam* - the import of the name *aditi; yaḥ* - (he) who; *aditeḥ* - of *aditi; etat* - thus; *adititvam* - the import of the name *aditi; evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *etasya sarvasya* - of all this; *attā* - the eater; *bhavati* - becomes; *sarvam* - all; *asya* - his; *annam* - food; *bhavati* - becomes

He reflected, "If perchance I kill this baby, I shall have but little food." He therefore created through (the union of) that speech and that mind all that there is, *viz.*, the *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the meters, the sacrifices, people and animals. Whatever he created, he resolved to devour. Verily he devours everything; that is why he is called *aditi*. He who thus knows the import of this name of *aditi* becomes the eater of the universe, and the universe becomes his food.

As we go from chapter to chapter, *brāhmaṇa* to *brāhmaṇa* and mantra to mantra of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we will be amazed to see how the rishi keeps up the continuity of the thread which perfectly correlates the beginning with that which follows. The *Upaniṣad* opens with the theme of a sacrifice. In the Christian context, Jesus dies to give people eternal life. In the Upaniṣadic context the phenomenal world is rejected to attain the Absolute. The horse presented in the opening passage is de-

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scribed as the all-filling cosmos. The process of revaluation is to see through the phenomenal world to have a correct grasp of the noumenon - the one Reality behind all appearances.

The second *brāhmaṇa* begins with a reference to universal hunger as the primal cause for creation. The first four mantras of the second *brāhmaṇa* present how the manifestation of life is necessitated by the imminent danger of hunger bringing drastic death. Very meticulously the rishi described the self-creating principle of life. Whether it is a self-created universe beginning with a nebula, or the self-creation of the blue planet earth, a flaming chip of the sun cooling down to have a biosphere around it, worthy to be a breeding ground of life, or the embryo of all beings beginning with an androgynous principle of negative and positive, or *yin* and *yang*, ultimately maturing into a finished life model, such as a bug, a fish, an elephant, a bird, or a human being, we get the underlying principle of creation.

Between the third and the fourth mantras we have seen the progress made from the gaping mouth of death to a self-worshipping life entity which created itself into the *prajāpati*. The purpose for which life emanated was to feed universal hunger. A specific mode of life is too meager an entity to satisfy universal hunger. In spite of that inadequacy the rishi does not forget that a life form was created to appease hunger. Seeing that the coupling of the mind and word has produced the essence of life, an archetypal person, leads to regarding it as reasonable: (1) not to kill and (2) to proliferate the abundance of life so that in the course of time every form of hunger happening everywhere in the universe can be adequately met.

In Plato's *Dialogues* he draws a distinction between all forms of manifestation in the phenomenal world and their corresponding archetypes in the world of intelligence. This is a very essential point to note. For every projection or creation there has to be a processing going through a period of time. That period can be a split second or several millions of years. It took millions of years for the galaxy to evolve from a wisp of smoke. It takes only a split second for a virus to proliferate itself. From our familiar life we can see how raw rice is cooked into edible food, or how a musician composes a piece with musical notations and then plays it on a piano or violin, or how a sculptor makes a mold to cast an image to be presented as a sculpture. Of all these examples the most telling one is the mold which is also called *karu*.

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The *karu* has in it an image in the reverse into which molten liquid can be poured for casting. The same principle is used in the manufacture of crockery, where semi-solid clay is poured into a mold to form a replica.

When a potter makes a pot there are two pots involved. One is the archetypal image of the pot in the potter's mind. The other is the pot that is taking shape on the wheel in accordance with the touch the potter gives. When the potter is fashioning a pot, his creative mind rapidly oscillates between the jar that is taking shape and the archetypal model in his mind so that he can check the correspondence between the manifesting pot outside and the mentally conceived pot inside. There is a similar archetypal creation principle in the first four mantras of the second *brāhmaṇa*. All creators place supreme value on the master copy. In the present context the self-projection or evolution of *prajāpati* is a master model for all creation. That is why when death wanted to swallow life, life protested and wanted to make endless copies of the model in various life forms. Once a creative artist knows how to accomplish the act of creation in a certain instance, one can play with the design and make innumerable modifications.

Between the world of spirit and matter, or life and death, hunger is divided into the demand for food in all created beings. The food is also conceived to have a one-to-one correspondence between demand and supply. As we go further in the *Upaniṣad* we will be taught the dialectics of going from the many to the one. Here there is the reverse aspect of going from the one to the many. The two bipolar counterparts in such creation are the word and the mind. Therefore it is said in this mantra that death decided to repeat the same principle of uniting word with mind in 10,000 modes. Both death and hunger are made to conform to their horizontal manifestation which can be localized in space and time in a particular body. But the principle of hunger and food, or death and life, can be a contiguous process of alternation in the verticality of time and representative space. This vertical hunger and therefore death are beginningless and endless. Even so are food and its nourishing quality.

Thus the transcendence of phenomenality hinted in the horse sacrifice is presented in this mantra and will continue to the very end of the *Upaniṣad*. That helps us to know the indescribable *brahman* or *ātman* in its transcendence and how the same can be experienced with limitations when studied in the context of im-

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manence where time and space prevail and name and form predominate. Similarly, the sciences that we learn in schools and colleges have their first principles in the mathematical logic which Husserl, Heidegger, and Jaspers prefer to call phenomenological reduction. We will have more comparative studies as we go on in this *Upaniṣad*. We go into these details so that the reader may not think of the *Upaniṣads* as books of ancient people which bear no relevance to today and tomorrow.

The basis of the *Upaniṣad* gives us a more realistic and reliable foundation of ethics than we find in more modern puritanic religions. We hear also the echoing of the teachings of this *Upaniṣad* in Indian epics as well as the *Bhagavad Gīta*, the cream of the *Mahābhārata*. Viewed from this conclusion of the *Upaniṣad*, all are created to be the food for something else. All also get their own opportunity to be benefitted by the food that is in abundance here. Viewed thus there is no killing and nothing is killed. There is only a fair distribution of the chances for transformation.

Mantra 6

so'akāmayata, bhūyasā yajñena bhūyo yajeyeti. so'śrāmyat, sa tapo'tapyata; tasya śrāntasya taptasya yaśo vīryamudakrāmat. prāṇā vai yaśo vīryam; tatprāṇeṣūtkrānteṣu śarīram śvayitumadhriyata; tasya śarīra eva mana āsīt.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *akāmayata* - desired; *bhūyasā* - great; y*ajñena* - with the (great) sacrifice; *bhūyaḥ* - again; *yajeya* - let me sacrifice *iti*; *saḥ* - he; *aśrāmyat* - was tired; *saḥ* - he; *tapaḥ atapyata* - (and) was distressed; *śrāntasya* - (while he was thus) tired; *taptasya* - (and) distressed; *tasya* - his; *yaśaḥ* - reputation; *vīryam* - (and) strength; *udakrāmat* - departed; *prāṇāḥ* - the organs; *vai* - verily; *yaśaḥ* - (are) reputation; *vīryam* - and strength; - *prāṇeṣu utkrānteṣu* - when the organs departed; *tat* - that; *śarīram* - body; *śvayitum* - to swell; *adhriyata* -

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began; *tasya* - his; *manaḥ* - mind; *śarīre* - in the body; *eva* - indeed; *āsīt* - was set

He desired, "Let me sacrifice again with the great sacrifice." He was tired and he was distressed. While he was thus tired and distressed his reputation and strength departed. The organs are reputation and strength. When the organs departed the body began to swell, but his mind was set on the body.

In this mantra we are asked to go back to *prajāpati* which was presented as the model for all subsequent creation. There are three principles which accompany life. One is knowledge which functions as a cognitive power. The second is a desire to use that knowledge to become what one is not now, but has the potential to become. Desire is always an unfoldment and actualization of a possibility. The third is the dynamics in desire which can prompt action to bring about the actualization of what is desired.

Between the recognition of one's desire as an overt function of the mind and the accomplishment of it through action, there is a period of time. All desires are lived in time. Time is presided over from the heavens by the sun and at the terrestrial plane with the energies of vital forces *(prāṇa)* and the nourishment of food which is digested by the fire inside. It is the fire above and fire below that sustain life.

All performances on the relativistic plane will have a beginning and an end. Sacrifice can be considered as an act of reducing something to nothing or nonexistence. It can also be considered an immortalization of what is sacrificed through the transference of its essence to an immortal plane. For instance, in the act of eating, the food being eaten is subjected to the intestinal fire which receives it as fuel. When we burn something the flames emit both light *(prakāśa)* and heat *(tejas)*. Light belongs to the Self. Heat belongs to the energy which is required for all performances of action. Thus when a person allows the food to decay, disintegrate, and transform into filth, the digestive system at the same time separates out nourishment to replenish decaying cells and thus safeguard the continuity of life.

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The various self-luminous principles in us are identified with what were previously worshipped in the Vedic ages as the shining ones of the heavens such as: *agni* (fire); *vāyu* (wind); *pūṣan* (the nourisher); *ra* (the divine friend), etc. Thus we are only offering to ourselves to transmute ourselves from being perishable psycho-somatic systems to being imperishable spiritual persons.

In this mantra it is said that *prajāpati*, after a period of time, desires to perform *tapasya* and sacrifice. Performing sacrifice is giving oneself a discipline of doing effort. Previously we saw that by the time he produced water, fire and earth from himself, he became exhausted. The present mantra presents the idea that as a person works out their destiny in the alloted period *(āyus)*, they lose energy. The two kinds of energy that work in a person are the sense organs with which one comprehends the world and the mind with which one directs all actions for the realization of one's desires. Two terms are used here - energy and reputation. A person builds up a reputation through the accumulation of knowledge and performances which yield commendable results. When the sense organs cannot function and the *prāṇa* comes to a close, the efficiency of the body comes markedly to an end. When the senses and the vital breath leave the body, it swells. This is a sign of its disintegration. Then it is useless for any further function. It is said here that the person whose function is being terminated can opt for another period by setting the mind on whatever the body had performed. During one's lifetime, *samskārās* are accumulated through various kinds of activities done to delight one's senses and fulfill the mind's desires. *Samskārās* are the conditionings put into one's mind/body system which can transform *a priori* knowledge into *a posteriori* experience. *A priori* knowledge is *jñāna*, and *a posteriori* experience is *vijñāna*. *Jñāna* and *vijñāna* put together give a person impressions in the subtle body which can be reduced into the essence of a lifetime. When one leaves the body everything deposited in the psychosomatic system also deteriorates. So the *samskārās* (conditionings) as such cannot be taken over to another life, but, like the fragrance of a flower can be carried by wind, the fragrance of one's personality features can be carried over to the next life as *vāsanā*. Here we have to understand a three-fold transformation going on. Physical processes such as sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell, pertaining to physical bodies, are absorbed into the system by sense organs and synthesized by the mind which

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brings about a psycho-somatic transformation of the gross into the subtle body. The various conditionings that affect the system from the prenatal origin of the child to its death are assimilated into the character or stabilizing principle of personality, the bulk of which is lived during one's lifetime as one's desires, promptings and urgings.

Through sublimation and transcendence, especially through contemplative discipline, the finest aspects of the *samskārās* are further screened and gathered into the most essential fragrance of a person's life in the here and now which is seeded with the sublime aspects of one's life. When the *prāṇa* departs and the body is about to perish, this seeded aspect, called *kāraṇa* or causal consciousness, is moved by its longing to reestablish itself in a new body. In the previous mantra we saw an archetypal processing to evolve a person. In the present mantra an archetypal transition is indicated which enables one to transcend death and get into the path of becoming eternal, if not immortal.

Mantra 7

so'kāmayata, medhyam ma idam syāt, ātmavyanena syāmiti. tato'śvaḥ samabhavat, yadaśvat; tanmedhyamabhūditi, tadevāśvamedhyasyāśvamedhatvam. eṣa ha vā aśvamedham veda ya enamevam veda. tamanavaruddhyaivāmanyata. tam samvatsarasya parastādatmana ālabhata. paśundevatābhyaḥ pratyauhat. tasmātsarvadevatyam prokṣitam prājāpatyamālabhante. eṣa ha vā aśvamedho ya eṣa tapati, tasya samvatsara ātmā; ayamagnirarkaḥ, tasyeme lokā ātmānaḥ; tāvetāvarkāśvamedhau. so punarekaiva devatā bhavati mṛtyureva; apa punarmṛtyum jayati, nainam mṛtyurāpnoti, mṛtyurasyātmā bhavati, etāsām devatānāmeko bhavati.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he *(hiraṇyagarbha)*; *akāmayata* - desired; *me* - of mine; *idam* - this (body); *medhyam* - fit for sacrifice; *syāt* - may (it) be; *anena* - through it; *ātmanvī* - embodied; *syām* may (I) be; *iti. yat* - because; *aśvat* - (it) swelled; *tataḥ* -

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thereupon; *aśvaḥ* - a horse; *samabhavat tat*- it became; *medhyam* - fit for sacrifice (thought he); *abhūt* - it has become; *iti tat* - therefore; *eva* - indeed; *aśvamedhasya* - the horse sacrifice; *aśvamedhatvam* - is called *aśvamedha; yaḥ* - who; *enam* - him *(prajāpati); evam* - thus (in the following manner); *veda* - knows; *eṣaḥ* - he; *ha vai* - indeed; *aśvamedhyam* - the horse sacrifice; *veda* - knows; *tam* - it (the horse); *anavarudhya* - (leaving) unconfined; *eva* - just; *amanyata* - (he) meditated; *samvatsarasya* - of one year; *parastāt* - after; *tam* - it; *ātmane* - to himself; *ālabhata* - (he) sacrificed; *paśūn* - (other) animals; *devatābhyaḥ* - to the deities; *pratyauhat* - (he) assigned; *tasmāt* - therefore; *sarvadevatyam* - dedicated to all deities; *prokṣitam* - the consecrated (horse); *prājāpatyam* - dedicated to *prajāpati; ālabhante* - (priests) sacrifice; *yaḥ eṣaḥ* - he who (the sun); *tapati* - shines; *eṣaḥ ha vai* - he indeed; *aśvamedhaḥ* - (is) the horse sacrifice; *samvatsaraḥ* - the year (is); *tasya* his; *ātmā* - body; *ayam* - this; *agniḥ* - (ordinary) fire; *arkaḥ* - (is) *arka* (sacrificial fire); *tasya* - his; *ime* - these; *lokāḥ* - worlds; *ātmānaḥ* - (are) limbs; *tau etau* - those two (fire and sun); *arkāśvamedhau* - (are) *arka* and the horse sacrifice; *punaḥ u* - again; *sa* - that; *ekā eva* - the same; *devatā* - deity; *mṛtyuḥ* - (which is) death; *eva* - indeed; *bhavati* - becomes; *punaḥ* - further; *mṛtym* - death; *apajayati* - (he who knows thus) triumphs over; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *enam* - him; *na* - not; *āpnoti* - overcomes; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *asya* - his; *ātmā* - self; *bhavati* - becomes; *etāsām* - these; *devatānām* - with gods; *ekaḥ* - *identified; bhavati* - becomes

He desired, "May this body of mine be fit for sacrifice. May I be embodied through it." (May I have a Self, *ātmanatva).* Thereupon it became a horse, *(aśva),* because it swelled *(aśvat).* " It has become fit for sacrifice *(medhya),*" thought he. Therefore the horse sacrifice is called *aśvamedha.* He who verily knows the *prajāpati* as follows indeed knows the *aśvamedha,* horse sacrifice. (Imagining himself as the consecrated animal and) leaving it just unconfined, he meditated. After one year he sacrificed it to himself, and assigned other animals to their

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respective deities. Therefore (priests even now) sacrifice to *prajāpati* the purified (horse) that is dedicated to all the deities. The sun that shines above is the horse-sacrifice; his body is the year. This fire is *arka* (sacrificial horse). These (three) worlds are the limbs of *arka*. The fire and the sun are respectively *arka* and the horse-sacrifice. These two again become the same deity, Death. He who knows thus triumphs over further death. Death does not overpower him, (because) it becomes his self. (Being *hiraṇyagarbha*) he becomes identified with these deities.

Where there is no form, there is nothing to be named. Structures are made only in the world of name and form. A structured design is intended for a function. Where there is no structure there is no function. In the opening mantra of the second *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter *(adhyāya)*, when the rishi said, "There was nothing here whatsoever," he meant that there was no form or name, structure or function. This is a presumption from the point of view of the gross world into which one wakes up and looks around to verify empirically what one is surrounded by. If nothing is seen or known or experienced, the positivity of that context becomes negated. The second *brāhmaṇa* develops its philosophical inquiry from the negative side. Having nothing to perceive is a negation. Negation is a threat to being. So there arises a polarity between being and nothingness. It is as if being is confronted by nothing which can be equated to death and the fear of death. Then being loses its absoluteness. The counterpart of nothing becomes the being of the relative which is phenomenal. When the Absolute is one, without a second, there is no distinction between space and spacelessness and time and timelessness. But then the omnipresent becomes local, fixed; the omnipotent becomes tired, weak, and smothered, and the omniscient becomes subjected to ignorance. What was incomparable becomes comparable. It becomes definable and ponderable; it becomes associated with loneliness and it has desires which lead to plans for work *(karma)*. One dimension after another dimension is added on to it as relative qualifications and it swells up in its psycho-physical dimensions like a dead body swelling up. Thus *prajāpati* becomes like a person born at a particular time

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in a particular space who undergoes changes and transformations such as of childhood, youth, middle age, old age and finally death. Such a one is indeed dead to the spirit on which all the layers of padding of unreality come one after another.

Our life is also like that. As Rousseau says, "Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains." We are born pure and then become shrouded by sins until we become incapable of loving anyone. We loathe even our own personal selves. *Prajāpati*, who came to forestall hunger and death, became a creature instead of the creator; became reduced to being only a slave to the dictates of his desires. A horse is like that. It is for its master to ride. The horse does not hold its reins. It is led, instructed, and prompted to go on beaten tracks. This goes on for some time. In the *Upaniṣad* it says, "It remained as a horse for a year." In the philosophical context we can say that the man of *saṃsāra* is allowed to live until he comes to the termination of his *āyus* (granted time to live in this world). Then he realizes that he didn't achieve anything. There was no ultimate meaning in his life. With repentance he wants to live a new life, a life that will be useful. So he prepares to sacrifice himself. The *Upaniṣad* wants us to know that this fall, recognition of fall, and return is the theme of everybody's life. Abhinavagupta calls it *pratyābhijña*, first forgetting and then remembering. In Semitic religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, every living person is said to have originated from the divine. Some people speak of each person as a spark of the divine. But it becomes contaminated and the divinity goes away and becomes subjected to sin. Ultimately one escapes. The tragedy of being is felt when one repents of what one has done in this world. One is subjected to judgement by reviewing one's deeds which brings one to redemption. According to the *Upaniṣad*, it is not sin, repentance, and redemption through a saviour, but the Absolute becoming reduced to a relative entity and thus becoming subjected to ignorance *(avidyā)*. Gnosis or knowledge is one's Self-rememberance. A person is not assailed by sin, but by forgetfulness and ignorance. When there is a recognition of the true Self, one is released from the clutches of ignorance. This is the sense in which *aśvamedha* is to be understood. In the second half of the same mantra we are told how the sacrifice is performed through mystical imaginations and one works out one's emancipation.

We are only certain of one thing - that there is a glow of con-

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sciousness which we unmistakably experience in the center of which we also identify ourselves as cognitive agents affected by what we cognize. We explain our affections to ourselves by using words to which we assign conceptual connotations. One can say: "this much is certain - that I know I exist and I am affected by my knowledge and my existence." Is there anything more than that? Our honest answer will be that there are many, many more things we see as interlaced with what has already been said. They are not as certain as our cognitions, affections, and inner urges. They don't fully explain this all-filling world we seem to experience. That world is presumed. In our presumption the world is seemingly multiple in its magnitude, constituents and variegated functions. So it is advisable to call that world phenomenon and its nucleus of certitude noumenon. Noumenon is that which we are certain of. Phenomena belongs to the wide range of uncertainty. For the time being let us confine ourselves to what we are absolutely certain of - the noumenon.

The relationship between our physical reality and the noumenon can be compared to the seed of a banyan tree which is smaller than a mustard seed and yet is capable of growing into a mammoth tree with a trunk which is very huge, with thick, long branches spreading out in all directions, full of foliage, and roots as big as its branches which go deep into the earth. There are even aerial roots hanging from the branches. Between spring and autumn the tree is covered with almost invisible flowers and bright red cherry-like fruits which contain hundreds of tiny seeds. Here we get an example of a very tiny insignificant nucleus of life swelling into a mammoth shape. The swelling is what the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* calls *aśvatvam*. The banyan tree is also called *aśvattha*. This tree remains for many, many years, sometimes even for thousands of years. Any incidence of life on earth is made to evolve into several natural consequences. Like the above-mentioned tree, when we grow, change and swell up, on one hand we become filthy like a dead and decaying body, and on the other hand the spirit in us expands and includes in it both the celestial and the terrestrial elaborations of truth. Something in us reaches out into the eternal and we become familiar with hundreds and thousands of values which are aesthetically magnificent, morally excellent, and philosophically valid, and we make many associations that foster the culture of humanity in a

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manifold manner. When these surprisingly interminable elaborations come to a person, his or her persona is no longer confined within the limits of a single body. It becomes the enshrined reality of several million other forms of life of which a good number can be identified with the personalities of people who have populated our history and are still living among us as stalwarts of thought and understanding. They are scientists, philosophers, poets, artists, lovers of humanity, and adventurers in spirit. We can stretch our spiritual hands so wide to hold all these wonderful outgrowths as if they are all emanations from us. It is in such a state that the perishing person in us says, "Let me be the imperishable and live the plenum in me - my perfection."

Here there is a self-glorification. The self that is glorified is not identified with the small ego of a person, but with that which is inextricable from what was slowly orchestrated by the Upaniṣadic rishi as the cosmic person *(virāj)*. The mere physiologic or anatomic set-up of the human body thus becomes too unworthy a dwelling place for us. Even the starry heavens and the moral world added on to all other matrices of imagination and value cannot adequately house us. Our infinitude in time and space and mass and all the intertwined laws governing the most gross and the subtle become a field where continuous sacrifices are going on and ceaseless resurrections are happening.

Even in the single act of sipping a cup of tea, or eating a piece of bread, we are propitiating the shining ones that account for the very reality of our lives. So we can say that we are making offerings to *pūṣan*, the nourisher, and to fire, *agni*, which is both in our digestive alchemy and also in the solar orb. Thus we become greater than all poets to live every moment of life in poetic beauty and allegoric excellence. The ancient poet of the *Upaniṣad* had a much simpler mind than ours. So he used the device of a literary style with allusions to metamorphosis. Afterwards the same was elaborated by the writers of epics, legends and mythical stories. Today fragments are chipped off to be looked at minutely with the help of the scientist's electron microscope or radio telescope. No assessment, no study, and no conclusion is far apart from the others. Such is the beautiful conclusion to which this mantra brings us.

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Brāhmaṇa 3

Mantra 1

dvayā ha prājāpatyāḥ, devāścāsurāśca. tataḥ kānīyasā eva devāḥ, jyāyasā asurāḥ; ta eṣu lokeṣvaspardhanta; te ha devā ūcuḥ, hantāsurānyajña udgīthenātyayāmeti.

Word Meanings

prājāpatyāḥ - the descendants of *prajāpati; dvyāḥ* - (were) of two kinds; *ha* - indeed; *devāḥ ca* - the gods; *asurāḥ* - the demons; *ca* - and; *tatah* - therefore; *devāḥ* - the gods; *eva* - indeed; *kānīyasāḥ* - (were) fewer; *asurāḥ* - the demons; *jya yasāḥ* - more numerous; *te* - they; *eṣu lokeṣu* - for these worlds; *aspardhanta* - rivalled (each other); *te ha* - those; *devāḥ* - gods; *ūcuḥ* - said; *hanta* - well (now); *yajñe* - in the sacrifice; *udgīthena* - through the *udgītha; asurān* - the demons; *atyayām iti* - let (us) beat

The descendants of *prajāpati* were indeed of two kinds, the gods and the demons. For obvious reasons the gods were indeed few in number and the demons more numerous. They rivalled each other for (the ownership of) these worlds. The gods said to one another, "Well, let us beat the demons through the *udgītha* in the sacrifice."

The Indian way of presenting a systematic body of knowledge called *śāstra* (science) is by investigating, or "going directly to" the primal cause which has brought about a selected field of inquiry. This has many advantages:

1) The cause is one whereas the effects are many. The inquiry is simplified by dealing with only one essential principle at

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a time;

2) The cause being one, it provides us with a model to know the unitive structure of a holistic vision;

3) As we pass from the causal to the subtle, and the subtle to the gross, we move from the transcendent to the immanent, from the less familiar to the more familiar. If the less familiar is probed into with the authority of a word testimony, the validity of that testimony can be established with the exhibits of logical reasoning which is also supported by the literature that was developed by the ancient seers.

In the first and second *brāhmaṇas* we saw how a negative principle is counterbalanced by a positive principle, i.e., "nothing" counterbalanced with "being." On the side of nothing we became familiar with four concepts: death, hunger, *vaiśvānara*, and fear. Hunger is a corollary to death and fear is a dynamic impetus made imperative by the imminence of death. Its universality was further elaborated by pointing out the presence of hunger wherever there is an incidence of nonbeing. On the positive side is being which meets the challenge of nothingness by offering itself as food symbolized by *hiraṇyagarbha*. Out of *hiraṇyagarbha* comes *prajāpati*. And out of the effort of *prajāpati* comes the basic elements that are necessary for the manifestation of life, heat, moisture and earth. Earth is derived from water and water is derived from heat. Fire is both celestial and terrestrial. The celestial fire is sun, the terrestrial fire is vital breath which has both a thermal aspect and a biologic alchemic significance. All these factors ensue from the archetypal model of the generative principle, *prajāpati*. *Prajā* means individuation; *pati* means the overseeing principle.

Two principles are derived from the generative source. One is the shining principle *(taijasa)* and the other the inertial force *(tāmasa)*. One witnesses fire, and sees far and wide; therefore, the seer of the light is the lover of infinitude. Light is radiant. Its effulgence fills space and makes the horizon recede to a vanishing point. Those who are blessed with self-born effulgence are called *sura*. *Su* stands for the bright such as the sun or *(sūrya)*. *Ra* means to be delighted. Those who delight in the light are called *sura* or *deva*. (The word *div* also means light.) On the other hand, the negative aspect of *sura* is the *asura*. *Asu* means the small self or ego which is confined to one's body identity. Thus the animating principle with which a body functions as a corporeal being

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automatically becomes a self-centered person, or to be more precise, egoistic. Such a person is called *asura*.

Actually the *deva* and the *asura* are not two separate persons. These are energy sources within the *prajāpati*. To make it a little clearer we can each look at our own personal self. We have within us a self-generating awareness or consciousness which is an expression of the spirit which shines forth through us. The light of the spirit makes relativistic complementarities to the Self, such as our minds, senses, reflexes, and bodily forces. Our physical systems have in them a mirroring device. When the light of the spirit prevails, our minds, consisting of the inner organ and the senses, give themselves to be directed by the spirit forces which seek the emancipation of life that is caught in the mesh of the body. So we feel like turning skyward in search of freedom. The sun, the heaven, and the vastness which embrace us from above, all become preferable to lying lost in the morass of the physical energy of individuation. This goal is called *śreyas*. On the other hand, the body-oriented force is keen to enjoy the pleasures of the senses and mind. The goal on that side is *preyas*. This is a pragmatic or utilitarian outlook. Both these forces are in us and they are in a perpetual war to claim supremacy of the world in which they are placed.

A word lives in its ability to create a vision of truth, whereas a thing is fixed to its locality. It is heavy and bogged down with its own weight. So in the present context the bright forces design to have victory over the dark forces by resorting to the psychodynamics of the word. In the Vedic period it was customary to invoke gods with the chanting of hymns. A revaluation was attempted in that field; the *devas* decided to elevate themselves by resorting to the chanting of the mantra indicated here with the word *udgītha*. *Ud* means upwards. *Gītha* means singing. To chant the mantra *AUM* one has to bring up the *prāṇa* from the lower levels of the body towards one's seat of consciousness and hence *AUM* is considered to be a fit mantra to prevail over the inert and static *asuras*. This has a direct reference to the evolving of more and more words by bringing in strategies to fight darkness. As words bring visions, desires also crop up and consequently rituals will be employed. Just as words can be coined to liberate a person to go skyward, there can be words coined to take one to a bodily, sensory or mental pleasure.

It is so strange that without going into the mysteries of the

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Upaniṣads, Freud spoke of *thanatos* (death) and *eros* (love). He also spoke of the two cathartic forces, ego cathexis and object cathexis. Freud got these hints from some deep unconscious source, but his ideas lacked the inner cohesion of the *Upaniṣadic* rishi's holistic vision. He was not able to develop his libidinal concept into a well-coordinated theory. As we go more and more into the secrets of the *Upaniṣads*, we will see that the entire gamut of the science of consciousness is very well systematized with value orientation.

Mantra 2

te ha vācamūcuḥ, tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhyo vāgudagāyat. yo vāci bhogastam devebhya āgāyat, yatkalyāṇam vadati tadātmane. te viduranena vai na udgātrātyeṣyantīti, tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvidhyan; sa yaḥ sa pāpmā, yadevedamapratirūpam vadati sa eva sa pāpmā.

Word Meanings

te ha - they; *vācam* - to the organ of speech; *ucuḥ* - said; *tvam* - you; *naḥ* - for us; *udgāya* - sing hymns *iti*; *tathā* - very well *iti*; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *tebhyaḥ* - for them; *udgāyat* - sang; *vāci* - due to the organ of speech; *yaḥ* what; *bhogaḥ* - (is) well-being; *tam* - that; *davabhyaḥ* - for the gods; *āgāyat* - (it) obtained by singing; *yat* - what; *kalyāṇam* - good; *vadati* - (one) pronounces; *tat* - that; *ātmane* - for itself; *te* - they (the demons); *viduḥ* - knew; *anena vai udgātrā* - through this very chanting priest; *naḥ* - us; *atyeṣyanti* - (the gods) will beat; *tam* - it; *abhidrutya* - rushing at; *pāpmanā* - with evil; *avidhyan* - (they) pierced; *saḥ yaḥ saḥ* - that; *pāpmā* - evil; *saḥ* - that (is); *eva* - indeed; *saḥ* - the; *pāpmā* - evil; *yat* - that; *eva* - verily; *idam* - now; *apratirūpam* - wrong; *vadati* - (one) speaks

"Well," they said to the organ of speech, "Sing hymns for

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us." "Very well," (said) the organ of speech (and) sang hymns for them. The (general) well-being that accrues from the organ of speech, it obtained for the gods by singing, but utilized the correct pronunciation for itself. The demons knew that (the gods) would beat them with the help of this very chanter. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. That is indeed the evil which is found today when one speaks what is wrong.

To begin with, the undeclared hypothesis is the Absolute. Then, for the convenience of inquiry, the Absolute is conceived of as having a negative undifferentiated aspect and a positive undifferentiated aspect. The undifferentiated nescience is postulated to be beginningless, infinite in its range, and to exist as the unknown and the unconscious. The positive undifferentiated aspect of the Absolute is the foundation of science. It is also vast. It has a beginning by which time and space are recognized as existential actualities belonging to the intuitively apprehended reality of truth. The Absolute and its two undifferentiated aspects have no form, name or action. When nescience and science begin to manifest, they present names, forms, and activities. We have seen how nothing became identified with death, which caused the pangs of hunger and the fear of death through the agency of *vaiśvānara agni*. Similarly we have seen how being manifested as the primeval egg of *hiraṇyagarbha* from which *prajāpati* came as an archetypal model of manifestation. We have further seen how within the *prajāpati* there appeared the principle of knowledge, represented by the shining ones (*devas*), and the principle of inertia (*asuras*). Thereafter we were told how light and darkness vied with each other and *devas*, the representatives of light, decided to overcome darkness with the help of the *udgītha*, the scriptural formulae and hymns. As both *devas* and *asuras* occupy the relativistic field of the conditional aspects of reality, both have access to the psychic organs of the inquiring mind, the impressions that are memorized, the ability to judge, and also the ego factor. They both use the five senses of perception and the five organs of action. As light can radiate farther than inert bodies, the *devas* are capable of comprehending the subtle implications of the scriptural teachings and going to the heights of imagination. At first, the sense organs and organs of action belong to

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the non-differentiated dark area of nescience. In course of time they are infused with the spirit of understanding and the ability to carry out instructions. However, these instruments basically belong to the body and therefore the dark and mechanical forces have a closer access to both the instrumentation of the mind and the organs of perception and action. Although all five organs of perception are equally important, a manifested being relates itself with other members of its species mainly through communication. The chief instrument of communication is the organ of speech. Of course, it is aided by the ear which is the receptive side of the organ of communication, and the eye which is primarily concerned with the identification of the other with whom each person's ego-oriented self communicates.

In actual life, both in the rituals of meditation (*dhyāna*), and propitiatory worship (*upāsana*), all organs, both of perception and action, get their due instruction. Special functions are allocated to those who have received specialized training, such as in chanting or in the offerings of libations etc. In the present *mantra*, when the *devas* ask *vāk*, the organ of speech, to chant the *udgītha*, it is substituted for an actual chanter who gives the chant. The benefit of chanting is considered to be of twelve parts. Of these, three benefits of chanting go to God, and the remaining nine benefits go to the chanter. The benefits that go to God are called the general good. The benefits that go to the chanter are called the specific good.

In the actual performance of the *udgītha* special attention is given to the organ of speech. Unlike other organs, the organ of speech has a dual function. It is both the agent of communication and also an organ of perception which is directly connected with the sap of life - it tastes the sapidity of water. The Sanskrit concept of taste has certain subtle significances such as the cultivation of preferences. That is to be seen not only in one's preferences for certain delicacies of food and drink, but also in savouring certain tones and pitches of sound such as in music, and in enjoying certain types of touches which are expressed in the intimacy of love. It also includes one's preferences regarding light and shade and the seven colors and their combinations. It also includes preferences for certain smells.

The cultivation of specialized tastes greatly impacts the development of personality. When it is in order we say, "A person of good taste." When there is disorder we speak of that person as

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being vulgar, having no taste. Another aspect is the essence of an alchemic composition which is recognized by the tongue as a *rasa*. *Rasa* belongs to aesthetic experiences which are closer to the demonic world of psycho-somatic culture. Through a series of dynamic conditionings, people are tied down to natural urges and instinctive preferences. In addition to the experiential aspect of aesthetics, there is a transcendent intuitive understanding of higher beauty which prefers ideas instead of objects or things. *Udgītha* is primarily intended to elevate us from the plane of sensory appreciation or mental indulgence. The divine spirit and the dark forces of unrefined nature are constantly at war with each other. This *mantra* explicates the difference between the liberated state of the wise and the bound state of the ignorant.

If we look at the thesauruses of Western languages and the *Amarakośa*, *Nighaṇṭu* and *Nirukta* of Sanskrit literature, we will find a cataloguing of synonyms and antonyms. With a little effort we can hierarchically arrange all the perennial values on one side and the demonic values which are mostly of a transient nature on the other. To get a practical insight into this study let us consider the values associated with what may be called fine speech. Speech has a non-articulated silent operation with which it enters from the unconscious to the preconscious; the speaker mentally looks at the words as they come in a sequential order. Mantras belong mostly to that category of speech where only one who mentally observes the mantra knows what is being presented in consciousness. The second kind of speech is a whispering communication in which the actual word is revealed to a listener in an atmosphere of secrecy in which only the speaker and listener are linked together. Then there is the articulation which is mainly for the purpose of making statements or giving instructions. There are also expressions of admission and rejection as well as exclamations which emphasize emotional states. All these are used in the *udgītha*. The *udgītha* is the repeated articulation and intonation of preformulated words which have conventional meanings and suggested meanings. As it is a repetitive practice, the chanter is naturally benefited. The major enemy of the dark forces is therefore the chanter who can become adept in attracting people and leading them into paths of wisdom. That is sure to spoil nature's intention of creation which is mainly limited to self-preservation and propagation of one's species. So we find that only very few people become gifted in articulating beautiful

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and inspiring thoughts in the most fascinating manner. This we can see easily by going to a public place of worship, such as a temple, synagogue, church, *masjid*, or *gurudwara*. Few are the singers and many are the listeners.

This very early finding of the Upaniṣadic rishi can be unnerving both to the democrats and to the socialists who want to think of people as essentially equal. People are more equal in their misfortunes than in their fortunes. This gives us a grim picture of the reality of creation or rather manifestation, but, at the same time, it gives us hope that one can rectify a number of disorders and ennoble himself or herself through effort and education, eventually gaining emancipation from the forces of nature.

The great novelist Victor Hugo has made a grand study of the struggle of human beings against both external nature and their internal nature. For thousands of years valuable suggestions have been lying buried in these priceless books of India's spiritual heritage, and even the best of minds which were devoted to the study of the secret texts of India did not discover the wisdom mines of India's great heritage.

Mantra 3

atha ha prāṇamūcuḥ, tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhyaḥ prāṇa udgāyat; yaḥ prāṇe bhogastam devebhya āgāyat, yat kalyāṇam jighrati tadātmane. te viduranena vai na udgātrātyeṣyantīti, tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvidhyan; sa yaḥ sa pāpmā, yadevedamapratirūpam jighrati sa eva sa pāpmā.

Word Meanings

atha ha - then; *prāṇam* - to the organ of smell, the nose; *prāṇe* - due to the nose; *jighrati* - (one) smells; (Rest as before.)

Then (the gods) said to the nose, "Sing hymns for us." "Very well," (said) the nose (and) sang hymns for them. The (general) well-being that accrues from the nose, it

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obtained for the gods by singing, but utilized the fine smelling for itself. The demons knew that (the gods) would beat them with the help of this very chanting priest. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. That is indeed the evil which is found today when one smells what is wrong.

We have seen from the second mantra how the entire world, both in its geographic network and historical correlation is governed by the word which is uttered by every member of the human race. The benevolent words of the rishis, prophets, and the great teachers like Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu, Socrates, Jesus Christ, and the words of the Holy Qur'an, continuously reverberate in the souls of the seekers of truth and help people to evolve into their higher aspects. On the other hand, we also saw how the word can be sickening, confusing, and like the tongues of the Tower of Babel. Then we saw the various areas in our physiological system and psychological mechanism which help us to articulate the ideas which come to our minds to be perfected by various devices.

Finding that the world of words and the communication through the meaning of words becomes evil or sinful, the truth-loving, freedom-loving principles of divinity in us *(devas)* turn to the faculty closely connected with the element air which fills the entire sky. Physiologically the nose is the entrance to our respiratory system. The nasal cavity leads to the mouth, and from the mouth it goes to the gullet. From there separate passages lead to the respiratory system (lungs) and to the stomach. In the economy of nature, the great needs of a human being - air for respiration and food and drink for nourishment - are allowed to mix in the mouth in which several faculties operate. Hearing brings in vibratory sound which stimulates the mechanism of speech of which the larynx is the main organ operated mainly by the electrical energy coming through the auditory system. There are also the pressurizing, controlling, and releasing devices of the mouth in which the lips, the teeth, the palate, the tongue and the cheeks are all in resonance with the requirements of the larynx. The same air is channelized for respiration. As the system is very complicated, many devices of efficiency are structurally put together in that small area so that one can sing or chant or make

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orations without having the need to suspend that activity for respiration. The phonic, tonal, musical and semantic functions are crowded here and are all supervised from above by centers in the cortex and hypothalamus so that reasonable intellectual clarity can accompany the transformation of ideas into articulated words or sounds.

These are all like a blessing and it is to this system the second appeal of the *devas* is addressed to elevate the consciousness of the individuated being to the higher plane of freedom and wisdom. This is the positive aspect. On the negative side, our nose and mouth cavities are like vacuum suckers. Everything in the atmosphere and in the living environment, including the fallout of foreign bodies that come as a by-product of one's daily vocational choice, is waiting for an opportunity to assail us with diseases which can afflict us right from the entrance of our mouth. The bacteria that go into the mouth can affect the tongue, the teeth, and the gums, and can make one's precious mouth into something so stinking like a septic tank. Infections easily affect the throat, and cancer can attack the throat or larynx. Excessive moisture, heat or cold of the air we breathe, and foreign material that enters the trachea can bring all kinds of bronchial diseases. Even though the body physiology has wonderful devices so that no large particle can enter into the lungs, people become devil's disciples and through smoking send elements of poison to the lungs which is very suicidal.

The sanitary fittings of our bodies have upper and lower parts. The lower part leads from the intestines and bladder to the anus and urinary canal for the excretion of filth. The upper part is right in the mouth, for both the digestive and respiratory systems. The drainage of the lymph brings a number of varieties of filth to be excreted through the mouth. The used lung air is flushed out through the mouth, and the wind that is produced in the stomach can also be excreted through the mouth.

The light that shines in an individual with a healthy respiratory system and gifted mouth is the most excellent gift a person can have. The same organs are subject to a thousand curses that make even people of very high spiritual and moral gifts victims of bronchial diseases. As air is connected with the *prāṇa* in breathing, the *prāṇa* is mainly responsible for bringing sensation from the sense organs to the cognitive system. Its infection is a constant threat. Life rests on the harmonious functioning of the

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respiratory system which facilitatates the governing of both the brain and the digestive system. In between comes the most precious center of a person, the heart, which, as far as the body is concerned, is functioning as an oversoul.

No wonder that the rishi thought of commissioning the respiratory system with the great task of ennobling the human mind. However, nature is not only skillful in her engineering devices, but is also cunning in outwitting any opposition to her sport or playfulness which intends for every construction to be followed by destruction. In this case also the *devas* fail in their tactics and the demonic forces born of nature win the race.

Mantra 4

atha ha cakṣurūcuḥ, tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhyaścakṣurudagāyat. yaścakṣuṣi bhogastam devebhya āgāyat, yatkalyāṇam paśyati tadātmane. te viduranena vai na udgātrātyeṣyantīti, tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvidhyan; sa yaḥ sa pāpmā, yadevedamapratirūpam paśyati sa eva sa pāpmā.

Word Meanings

cakṣuḥ - to the eye; *cakṣuṣi* - due to the eye; *paśyati* - (one) sees; (Rest as before.)

Then (the gods) said to the eye, "Sing hymns for us." "Very well," (said) the eye (and) sang hymns for them. The (general) well-being that accrues from the eye, it obtained for the gods by singing, but utilized the fine seeing for itself. The demons knew that (the gods) would beat them with the help of this very chanting priest. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. That is indeed the evil which is found today when one sees what is wrong.

From the very beginning of the first chapter we have seen that the rishi was keen to systematize *brahmavidyā*, the Science of the Absolute. He begins with one simple known fact. Then he relates it to a couple of consequences to which the causal factor

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leads. The word that we utter is a projection of the light of the Self that becomes first an idea, then a word, then an articulation, then a language, then a suggestion that inspires and that leads to creativity. This is in perfect order in the presentation of the rishi's creation myth.

The third *brāhmaṇa* began with the chanting of the Upaniṣadic formula *AUM* as the first *udgāna* attempted. With the failure of that, the attempt moved to the nostrils which come above the mouth. Thereafter it moved to the eyes. Of all symbols, humanity has elevated the symbol of the eye above everything else. Even God is thought of as an eye which is incessantly watching us both from above and from within. The eye above is identified with the sun which is the illuminator of the world. If the sun is the affector, the eye on the face is the receptor. The major part of human life is played out between the sun in the firmament and the eye of terrestrial beings. The sun is a direct revealer of things. The eye not only receives the image revealed by the sun, but it also acts as an interpreter of the image. The actual revelation is of the form. When we become familiar with a form we start seeing the beauty of it. That generates in us a sense of formal beauty. In the course of time, we see that the beauty of a form is enhanced by our emotional relationship with it. For human beings, the most beautiful form is the harmonious symmetry of the human body. Man has a sexual interest in woman, so to a male the female is the most beautiful. For the female a male person is very attractive.

As soon as we see a form we want to give an appellation to it. Thus comes the name. Form is given content by filling it with a concept. The form sits outside. In correspondence with the form, the concept resides inside. Within a species there can be several variations of form. The concept is continually transforming to find a norm with which the forms can be universalized. Thus in the concept there is an essential unity of form which makes formal beauty universally appealing to all connoisseurs of beauty. This leads to the aesthetic appreciation of the perfect form. Children have a special ability to catch the universal essence of the generic form which is perceived in all the members of a species. As the child grows up, with increased power of observation and deftness of hand, realistic copying of nature can come to a certain norm of perfection. As we rise from the form to its name, the beauty of the form allows it to rise from its material

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context and be interjected in the suggestiveness of words. Here, the meaning is elaborated and a wide range of comparison is available to the admirer of beauty. The artist is more and more concerned with aesthetic elaboration. Beauty is accepted on the side of ornamental illumination and also in the world of utility. It can be an added dimension of devices. We can see this in architectural design, interior decoration, crockery, cutlery, pieces of furniture and various industrial gadgets. Even destructive weapons like pistols or rifles are beautifully shaped both for efficiency and for perceptual attraction.

The sun is an ever-shining self-luminous body. The elevation which our soul aspires for is to make the eye as constant as the sun. Physically this is not possible and therefore the mystic aspires to efface the difference between wakeful life and sleeping life. He or she exercises spiritual disciplines to be wakeful in the core of sleep and to make the wakeful more contemplatively identified with the vigilance of the spirit than the wakefulness of the body. Just as with the modern artist, when he or she makes abstractions to escape the tyranny of the physical form in order to transcend both form and name, there is a factor in the sense of beauty which identifies itself with the value of values, the *summum bonum*. The *summum bonum* in the Indian mystical view is none other than *ānanda* which is the very foundation of the Self. The eye and the Self both meet in the *ātman* without any duality. One can be led by light to the goal of the unalloyed imperiential blissfulness of the Supreme Self. It is for this kind of emancipation that the shining principles in us appeal to the eye to lead us from darkness to light: *tamaso mā jyotir gamayā*.

Now let us see how negativity or the demonic forces in us counter the elevating song of the eye *(udgāna)* at every step. Formal beauty has its negative counterpart in the haunting images of formal ugliness. Just as the form is related with the name and name suggests a meaning, there is also a nominal ugliness which brings aversion from a great depth. When the great novelist of psychological realism, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, came to the close of his life, he came to an imperative conclusion that there is an evil established in the deepest depth of every soul and, like a recurring disease, it flares up again and again to darken the whole mind of a person. This evil spews its venom into everything that the person relates with. First there comes indifference. Indifference swells up into revulsion. Revulsion becomes a positive ha-

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tred that brings to the mind an obsessive thought of revenge fed with jealousy or envy which can dampen the spirit of love and extinguish the light of discrimination which is meant to lead one in one's everyday life. Thus at the most unexpected hour a person who seemed to be as gentle as a lamb transforms into a cruel brute. In the case of a person who has many supportive inspirations to climb higher and higher, the lower passions can be curbed and with some effort even transformed. But the person under the spell of darkness has nothing to look forward to. Even the soul of such a person is of darkness. He or she is so spiritually blinded that no reason can prevail. Such *tāmasic* persons can be obsessed with a sense of revenge. Their inhibitory mechanisms are such that they will not submit themselves to any kind of discipline. This is how the jubilation of the eye can be foiled with the obscuring darkness of hell.

It is in such a beautiful way the rishi of the *Upaniṣad* takes us to the blessedness of the illuminating light of knowledge and also gives a graphic description of the veils of darkness to which the faculty of our sight can be exposed.

Mantra 5

atha ha śrotramūcuḥ, tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhyaḥ śrotramudagāyat; yaḥ śrotre bhogastam devebhya āgāyat, yatkalyāṇam śṛṇoti tadātmane. te viduranena vai na udgātrātyeṣyantīti, tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvidhyan; sa yaḥ sa pāpmā, yadevedamapratirūpam śṛṇoti sa eva sa pāpmā.

Word Meanings

śrotram - to the ear; *śrotre* - due to the ear; *śṛṇoti* - (one) hears; (Rest as before.)

Then (the gods) said to the ear, "Sing hymns for us." "Very well," (said) the ear (and) sang hymns for them. The (general) well-being that accrues from the ear, it obtained for the gods by singing, but utilized the fine hear-

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ing for itself. The demons knew that (the gods) would beat them with the help of this very chanting priest. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. That is indeed the evil which is found today when one hears what is wrong.

In the fight between the gods and the demons, or the abstract and the concrete, the unifying principle and the manifold entities, the venue is shifted from local fixation to the omnipresent. Whatever is is in the confinement of the *ākāśa* which alone is the truly beginningless. Everything begins in it. Being synonymous with the transcendent, it is truly inaccessible and inconceivable. The ultimate goal of the manifested is to become identified with it, leaving no trace of distinction. One of the Indian schools of philosophy and mysticism has a special name for this inconceivable attainment. It is called the state of the *tīrthankara*. According to the Jaina school of philosophy even the most certain reality has in it an opposite, belying our certitude. To exemplify the gradation of the immanent and the transcendent they give the example of a lump of wet cotton wool. When the cotton wool is squeezed, most of the water held in it is removed from it. The sinful or evil action that makes a person heavy is his or her mind, moods, and disposition, and these are compared to the water that the cotton wool is soaked with. Similarly when demonic sins are purged from our lives, we also become freed of our binding heaviness. Care should be taken that the karmic water does not re-enter the fabric of our minds and spirits. If wet cotton wool is exposed to heat or to the sun the water will evaporate away. Similarly the heat and light of discrimination takes away from us all taint of the moisture of *samsāra*. Then the soul expands like cotton wool which gains more and more space between its fibers. Then each fiber is separated from the rest and the cotton wool is able to lift itself from the gravitational pull of the earth and rise into the sky. As it goes higher and higher it also distributes itself farther and farther. When finally the fibers are carried away by the vibratory motion of the loosening winds, nothing is left except the space of *ākāśa*. Thus a local fixed entity transforms itself into an invisible omnipresence. This blessedness belongs to *ākāśa* which is both a physical entity and a spiritual notion. In its all-embracing aspect it is the sky. The begin-

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ning of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*: "This is. This envelops All. Apart from this not even an iota is left in the whole" *(īśāvāsyam idam sarvam yat kiñcajagatyām jagat)* can be applied to *ākāśa*. The first incident in *ākāśa* which is the archetypal beginning of creation is a primeval throb. We are so impressed by the physical motion of bodies that we are incapable of conceiving a throb in the invisible, though it should be possible in our days when a ground engineer can sit in a space station on earth and receive photographs from a spaceship that is orbiting Saturn or Jupiter. The archetypal throb, though it is an invisible and even immaterial pulsation, has an inner movement of expansion from a central point to the circumference and a convergence of what has moved away from the center to the periphery back to the center. By extrapolating the principle of pulsation we get the archetypal model of a vibration. Like Guy Murchie's wave, this vibratory motion is the ghost which is the prime material out of which phenomenality is fashioned:

> What's an ocean wave made of?
> At first glance nothing but saltwater;
> But keep your eyes on it ten seconds . . . twenty seconds . . .
> You'll notice the water is roused
> Only momentarily by the wave
> Which passes it by,
> That the wave leaves the molecules and bubbles behind,
> That the wave in essence is a kind of ghost
> Freed from materiality by the dimension of time.
> Made not of substance
> But energy. 2

If we were to see the inside of a living body through an echo-scan we would be surprised to observe that every part of the organism has its own typical pulsation and vibratory movement. When we hear sounds on the radio sent via satellite, or see photos transmitted from a distance, inaudible vibrations become audible and meaningful and invisible radio waves become visible and colorful. It is to this primal phenomena that the supreme intelligence in us makes an appeal to save us from the clutches of the octopus-like *samsāra* of this world. If the *ākāśa* or space which is immeasurable can be epitomized in the frequency and pitch of a sound wave, it can be inserted into the cochlea of the

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faculty of hearing with the resonance that is made in the drum of the ear and the rhythmic hammering of the bones sitting close to the drum. Nowhere are the macrocosm and the microcosm held together with closer ties. The message that is received by the ear can be the highest truth which philosophers, mystics and scientists pine for all their lives. A simple equation that is heard by the ear can have the potency to transform this world into a world of beauty and harmony, or it can have the destructive power to blast away the universe. Such is this vibratory power of the *ākāśa* which we inherit through the small holes of our two ears.

Having found that the gateway to all knowledge, profound and profane, or wisdom and confusion, comes through the ears, Sāraṅgadeva, one of India's greatest musicians, wrote his science of music by first presenting the evolution of the ear. The small thud that a wisp of air makes on the drum of the ear goes into a depth which no surgeon can discover in the space of the mind behind the ear. It is called the *cidākāśa*; there the little thud transforms into the blast of a word *(sphoṭa)* making a clear vision or idea fill the soul of the person who hears it. This study has been developed in India as the *sphoṭavidyā*. A word of assurance can bring a hopeless patient back to live a useful life for several more years. A pessimistic suggestion put in the ear can make a person shriek and sob and lose himself or herself in a mire of frustration which can result even in death. Here we can see the duel between the angels and demons in us using swords as sharp as the thunderbolt of Indra. The sure ladder for us to climb to the peak of the peaceful haven of freedom and truth is certainly the words which we hear. No wonder the demonic enemies of wisdom stand right there to dissuade the word of wisdom that liberates the enslaved soul. The Caliph of Alexandria ordered a million books of the Alexandrian Library to be set on fire. Even today religious fanatics do not allow the wisdom of another religion or country to be heard by the captives in their prison homes which they call their dear religion. Thus the fight to plug the ear is going on everywhere. The *Upaniṣad* is not referring to some past idiosyncrasies, but to something of vital importance in our own day.

Introduction to Mantra 6

Just as the sky envelops everything, the body and the senses

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are enveloped by the mind. The mind is not a particular faculty like the eye or nose. Daily life is like a continuous stream. It has a flow which should not become stagnant. It originates with the divine and ultimately flows to a culminating point from where it can have a return to the Absolute. To the *devas*, the mind seemed to be the most fit agent to continue the flowing stream of life. So they thought that it would be wise to ask the mind to give the *udgāna*. The mind is capable of mentation, i.e., bringing forth ideas. When we employ our minds to meditate, to reason or to solve problems, they become familiar with the logistics of thinking and very capable instruments to correlate and coordinate the data that is brought from the external world through the senses. The mind is like a converging point to which all the senses go. When they are united, meaning can be ascertained from hearing, touch, sight, and smell. The individual can make a confection of values which can keep the mind pleasant, bright and optimistic, with the ideal of proceeding from the multitudinous things to the Absolute. Thus the *devas* found the mind very fit for the *udgāna*, and the mind agreed. We have seen that the five senses can be attacked by the negative tendencies in us. The mind has two aspects. One is its biochemical basis and the other is its neurological basis. The chemistry of the mind depends very much on the constituents of the person's blood. The nervous system is connected with the glands which produce various kinds of enzymes and hormones. At certain times in our lives hormones are released in us and new enzymes are created in us. Chemical and physiological results can come from the interaction of the mind and ideas. So the mind cannot be treated as spirit. However, it receives its light from the Self. It is torn between two worlds and taken advantage of by two worlds. This is the peculiarity of the mind. It is easy for the mind to be attacked from the side of the body chemistry. A drug can affect the mind and change its state. It is this mind that is now asked to perform the *udgītha*.

Mantra 6

atha ha mana ucuḥ, tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhyo mana udgāyat; yo manasi bhogastam devebhya āgāyat, yatkalyāṇam saṅkalpayati tadātmane. te viduranena vai

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na udgātrātyeṣyantīti,tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvidhyan; sa yaḥ sa pāpmā yadevedamapratirūpam saṅkalpayati sa eva sa pāpmā; evamu khalvetā devatāḥ pāpmabhirupāsṛjan, evamenāḥ pāpmanāvidhyan.

Word Meanings

manaḥ - to the mind; *manasi* - due to the mind; *saṅkalpayati* (one) thinks (Rest as before.); *evam* - in this way; *u* - also; *khalu* - indeed; *etāḥ* - these (other); *devatāḥ* - deities; *pāpmabhiḥ* - with evil; *upāsṛjan* - (the demons) tainted; *evam* - thus; *enāḥ* - these; *pāpmanā* - with evil; *avidhyan* - pierced

Then (the gods) said to the mind, "Sing hymns for us." "Very well," (said) the mind (and) sang hymns for them. The (general) well-being that accrues from the mind, it obtained for the gods by singing, but utilized the fine thinking for itself. The demons knew that (the gods) would beat them with the help of this very chanting priest. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. That is indeed the evil which is found today when one thinks what is wrong. In this very way they also tainted the other deities with evil - pierced them with evil.

The mark of *homo sapiens* is the thinking faculty, called *manas* in Sanskrit. With the mind we relate with everything. At the same time we are most puzzled when we look for our minds. We know our bodies, all the five sense organs, and the objects which are presented in our minds. We know what is perceived, what is conceived. With logical relevance and logistic purposiveness we can reason with the same ease with which we breathe. And yet we do not know what the mind is. If it is located somewhere, where is that "somewhere"?

In spite of this mystery of a non-existential mind, we determine the existence of all because the existence, subsistence, and value of everything is suggested by the mind. The mind brings to

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the judgement of the individual that he or she belongs to the Self. The mind also suggests that the Self in all its glory is God. But we should ask, "To whom does the mind suggest all this?" because the "I" or "we" we speak of is a magical phenomena born of the same magical mind. The first part of the English word mind is intriguing. It says "mi." The trickery of the mind is that it envelops all and identifies that with the alpha and omega of the existentially known and the existentially unknown. In the Sanskrit alphabet '*a*' is the alpha, and '*ha*' is the omega. It is a Sanskrit convention to add '*m*' at the end of most words to indicate the closing of a gestalt, giving *aham*. What corresponds to *aham* in English is "I." When one says "I am," that is etymologically close to *aham*. The mind remains a secret monitoring consciousness which projects the ego.

It is to this mysterious mind that the *devas* in us make an appeal to save the Self from the demonic forces which belong to the non-Self. The non-Self has qualities opposed to the spirit. The spirit is bodiless, without dimensions. Matter is embodied and it can be as specific and concrete as a lump of clay or a piece of stone. This is the elemental virtue of earth. The spirit does not attach itself to anything. Water not only moistens, but it is also the solvent of many embodied forms. Thus it has magical dynamics to change from solid to liquid, liquid to vapor, and from vapor to the invisible. It can change its temperature from steaming hot to icy cold. Water contributes to the magical transformation of things in the world. Fire is a direct agent of combustion which can fuse bodies with dissimilar molecular arrangements. It can be a fire that burns a body of a person to ashes. It can be a gentle fire such as the warmth that one gets in a sweet embrace of love which fuses two people into the passionate wedlock of forgetting their otherness. As we move upward from earth to water, and water to fire, we become convinced of the magical ascending quality of natural elements. The earth, water and fire have visible qualities.

Then the elements make a leap into the invisible, preparing themselves to move close to the transcendent. From the gross they go to the subtle. The ethereal space holds the air so close to it and it allows the air to be vibratory and move with such gentle breezes that it is lauded in lyrics. The same air can become monstrous as a whirlwind or dust storm or typhoon to play havoc in the sky, in the desert, in the mountains, and in the oceans. It

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can become a mammoth vacuum in the sky that can even suck buildings into its gaping mouth when it becomes a tornado. The earth wind can aid and counter the solar wind and other cosmic winds. Then there is the sky which is almost identical with the spirit. It is this magical transforming property of nature we see reflected in the mind. There is a triangular game played by the pentagon of the world with the prismatic kaleidoscope of its powers of transparency, translucency, and opacity.

Almost all religions and individual persons think of a person as a soul dwelling in a body. This is a crude concept but admitting it has an advantage. The consciousness or the awareness of a person is the norm of one's reason. The subject and its object can be juxtaposed within a simple bracket - one can look into the palm of one's hand and see a morsel of food in it. That is the advantage of being embodied with a mind that can stand outside the body and look at it. The same person can introspect without using any sense organs and envision the Self-luminous light in which the entire scheme of consciousness is laid out. That is the advantage of having a mind that can penetrate into the core of consciousness. The mind is like a rainbow which at one end has a deeply colored spectrum arising from the foliage of a lake shore, and at the other end vanishes into a bright sky. The mind enjoys the here and now and can also transcend space and time and go into its own secret. When it comes back, like a myth-making story teller it tells us what transpired between the mind and god, the mind and the Self, the mind and the departed ones; it can also narrate the most fascinating hallucinations. Like a good friend bringing gifts of sweets, the mind will always gratify us by bringing a few glittering metaphors gathered from its contemplative intuitions. Such is the magical phenomena of the mind to which the *devas* make their appeal.

Bodies may come and go, but that is not the way the mind fares in this world. It does not come, and it does not go. We come to the mind and, on a day of our destiny, we will leave the mind. This is the most treacherous of all satanic forces. A man may die and go away, but the words he spoke, the visions he had, the ideas he shared with others, the actions in which he indulged are deposited in the memory banks of so many contemporaries. Psychologists have been aware of this aspect of mind and coined a word for it - the collective unconscious. Each of us has a personal account, a current account and a savings account in

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the bank of the unconscious. We are at the bank counter when we are dreaming. We seldom suspect that the universal mind holds us like puppets in its crafty palm and manipulates our thoughts and behavior. Now the geneticists speak of the genes having in them memory bits of a million lives. Thus the depth and vastness of the phenomena called mind is slowly being discovered. Trying to purify the mind is like desalinating the ocean. Of course, we can make a few gallons of distilled water out of the ocean. Such is the acquisition of the best of our saints. What hope is there for the individual mind when it is surrounded by the universal mind and the cosmic winds of a variety of magnetic fields? To get a proper consent for the mind to elevate us to the heavens where we can listen to the music of the spheres once again, nature proves to us that the embodied creature held in chains everywhere cannot be easily released. To explicate this truth a thousand volumes can be written. The rishi, expecting the future generation to decipher the secret of creation, simply said that the mind was asked to sing a beneficial *udgāna* and it failed.

Mantra 7

atha hemamāsanyam prāṇamūcuḥ; tvam na udgāyeti; tatheti, tebhya eṣa prāṇa udgāyat; te viduranena vai na udgātrātyeṣyantīti, tamabhidrutya pāpmanāvivyatsan; sa yathāśmānamṛtva loṣṭo vidhvamseta, evam haiva vidhvamsamānā viṣvañco vineśuḥ; tato devā abhavan, prāsurāḥ; bhavatyātmanā, parāsya dviṣanbhrātṛavyo bhavati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

atha ha - then; *imam* - this; *āsanyam* - residing in the mouth; *prāṇam* - to (deity of the) vital force; *ucuḥ* - said; *tvam* - you; *naḥ* - for us; *udgāya* - sing hymns *iti*; *tathā* - very well; *eṣaḥ* - this; *prāṇaḥ* - vital force; *tebhyaḥ* - for them; *udgāyat* - sang; *tam* - they (the demons); *viduḥ* - knew; *anena vai udgātrā* - through this very chanting priest; *naḥ* - us; *atyeṣyanti* - the (gods) will beat *iti*; *tam* -

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it; *abhidrutya* - rushing at; *pāpmanā* - with evil; *avivyatsan* - (they) wanted to pierce; *saḥ yathā* - (but) as; *loṣṭaḥ* - a clod of earth; *aśmānam* - a rock; *ṛtvā* - dashing against; *vidhvamseta* - is crushed; *evam* - so; *ha eva* - indeed; *vidhvamsamānaḥ* - crushed; *viṣvañcaḥ* - blown in all directions; *vineśuḥ* - (they) perished; *tataḥ* - therefore; *devāḥ* - the shining ones; *abhavat* - became (their true selves); *asurāḥ* - (while) the dark ones; *parā (abhavat)* - (were) defeated; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *ātmanā* - as his true self; *bhavati* - becomes; *asya* - his; *dviṣan* - jealous; *bhrātṛavyaḥ* - relative; *prābhavati* - is defeated

Then the gods said to this vital force residing in the mouth, "Sing hymns for us." "Very well," (said) this vital force (and) sang hymns for them. The demons knew that the gods would beat them with the help of this very chanting priest. They (therefore) rushed at it and pierced it with evil. But as a clod of earth, dashing against a rock, is shattered, so, crushed and blown in all directions, they perished. Then the shining ones became (their true selves), and the dark ones were defeated. He who knows thus becomes his true self, and his jealous relative is defeated.

The archetypal manifestation generally known as creation is essentially a projection of the one truth which pulsates with varying dynamics. The same model of projection can be seen in a microscopic being such as a protozoa, a microcosmic being such as an individuated human, or a macrocosmic entity like a galaxy of stars. In all these it is as if an unknown energy employs a series of devices to vegetate, to evolve from a spiritual core with manifold psycho-physical elaborations, or to expand from a single spin to the creation of a million revolving heavenly bodies.

In all projections there is a vertical function which points to a perennial scheme of meaningful transformation as well as several recurring figure of eight repetitions which push to the limits of various horizons of alternating circles as if the figure of eight is a universally acclaimed format which allows complementary am-

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bivalences. The microscopic protozoa is the humblest of all living beings. It has no sense organs, no mouth, and no inner faculties apart from a photosensitivity in its front part which is reciprocated with a reflex in the hind which enables it to deflect its head from light. In the entire world of living beings the behavior of every member of the living species follows the lead of the protozoa in the discriminative regulation of its reflexes, mainly to move away from the painful. To begin with, pain is only assumed. In the human being, the most complex of all organisms, both unconscious behavior and the conscious deliberation of choosing between the plus and minus, i.e., the entire mechanism of physical, psychological, moral, and spiritual attraction and avoidance, is taken over by the spirit. It enters into every device, whether mechanical, biologic, biochemical or psycho-physical, and develops all the tactical and logistical means by which a scheme of evolution in space and time can be carried out both precisely and purposefully.

This entity or nucleic spirit in the human species can be centrally located in the control principle of the body/mind complex's electromagnetic elaborations. The rishi of the *Upaniṣad* calls it the vital force or the *prāṇa*. We can see a similar function in a tree. Its lower half is roots which go into the physio-chemical world buried in the unknown and its upper half is its trunk and branches which are exposed to all the energy sources which come from the sky above so to speak. In a human being, the tip of the spine caters both to the downward-going roots and the upward-going branches. It is called the *mūlādhāra*, the base foundation of the system. The synergic throb that is presumed to mark the center is called *mūlādhāra*. It is like a causal ganglia which is connected with the whole body. When we examine the lumbar region of the vertebrae, the area where the *muladhara* is located looks like a virtual tail. In most animals this part looks like a part of the vertebrae which was not properly tucked into the body. This tail end is like a propeller of life. It is almost ignored and left in the unconscious. The rishi calls it the *brahma puccham*, the Absolute terminal.

All incentive to life comes creeping from this hideout. It has no moral disposition because it is concerned mainly with the animal's biologic need. The urges and needs propelled from the *mūlādhāra* are imperative - a living being cannot resist or deliberately dismiss them. Above it, at the base of the genital, is an-

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other center which functions as a monitoring energy both for biologic purposes and psychologic needs. The *mūlādhāra* is basically an electromagnetic generator and control area. The next synergic center involves the sexual impulses and the general libidinal cathexis which have hot-lines to all the vital glands that are actively engaged in the propensities of the person. This is called *svādhiṣṭhāna* because it is the very basis of one's personality.

Then comes a symbiotic system which keeps the person's physicality and spirituality in perfect resonance. It is the central pooling station of all the resources of the body/mind/spirit to generate a healthy body to be presided over by a bright spirit and function through a healthy mind. This is called *maṇipura*. It is located at the center where the embryo was fed and nourished and infused with vital energy by the mother when it was growing into a child in the mother's womb. The cleansing of the bodily organism and the replenishing of it with healthy new cells, muscular tissues and all such needs of the ever-expanding faculties is constantly controlled here by the conjunction of *prāṇa* and *apāna*. Although the *maṇipura* is marked at the navel, there are many exchange centers in the body such as the large intestine, small intestine, stomach, heart, kidneys, lungs, and liver. An open area for the mixing of *prāṇa* and *apāna* is in the mouth cavity between the lower terminals of the nostrils and the beginning of the wind-pipe and gullet.

But before we go from the navel to the mouth, there are two other important synergic centers. First is the heart which has a supremacy over the rest of the body and mind because of its consistency in rhythmic pulsations. It is the largest of the unconscious areas from which a number of communications go into the preconscious psyche of a person. The heart is said to have a logic of its own because it is the most fantastic of all natural devices to preserve life. It has an obligation to the love-generating nature and is the caretaker of every cell of the body. It is called *anāhata* because it never breaks its rhythm. When it does break it, life may fly away from the body. The heart can be stubborn and steadfast in its resolutions and it can be gentle and evanescent like a lyrical suggestion. Heart is said to be the central seat of *prāṇa* and the *mūlādhāra* is said to be the central seat of *apāna*. Both these are held firm by *udāna*, the chief of *prāṇas*. At the same time, the *udāna* commissions *vyāna* to be in the central cavity of the head in which all deliberations happen with conse-

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quences that are easily recognized by the active consciousness of the central nervous system. Between the heart and the crown of the head, two major institutions of personal life which have environmental relationships are constituted. One is the throat where speech is produced. The *prāṇa* and the *apāna* constantly exchange their energies in the mouth cavity where *vyāna* presides. The judgement that comes from the intellect, revealed to the wakeful and vigilant judging faculty that is placed between the two eyebrows, is constantly watching the word that manifests in the larynx. It can stop any word or thought that is deliberated through the mouth. In the *ājña* there is an uncompromising censor, a moral censor so to say. To borrow a term from Freud, this is the domain of the super-ego. The censorship that may happen in the *ājña* is often interrupted by the mother-like heart which tempers everything with mercy. Thus there can come a conflict between the head and the heart. The word-manifesting area of the throat is in liaison with the heart. The heart is willing to accept many disciplines called *tapas* if the words manifesting in the throat plex *(viśuddhi)* are of a purificatory function.

All deliberations stop within the *ājña*, but the controlling principle of *prāṇa* is capable of going beyond it to the very crown of the head. Indian mystics believe that after the completion of the human body, i.e., when the fetus is about to become a child, the divine enters from the top of the skull into the system to live in its heart as a witness of all its inner activities. When a child is watched immediately after its birth, we can see a throbbing area at the top of its head where its skull is very soft. This area is called *sahasrāra*. *Sahasra* means a thousand, *ra* is a blissful state.

The person *(puruṣa)* is said to be released from the body finally through the anus, genitals, mouth, nose, ears or eyes. A yogi, however, aspires to leave the body by making an exit through the crown of the head. Such is the dominance of *prāṇa*, not only in one life. The *prāṇa* is considered to be the carrier of life into the body and out of the body and into a subsequent body. In the present verse the *devas* make an appeal to the *prāṇa* in the mouth *(vyāna)*, commissioned by the *udāna*, to sing the *udgītha*. It sings and defeats the dark forces by preparing synergic center after synergic center to throb in unison with the will of the Absolute which is said to preside in the heart of all, also called the Kingdom of God.

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Mantra 8

te hocuḥ, kva nu so'bhūdyo na itthamasaktetī; ayamāsye'ntarītī; so'yāsya āṅgirasaḥ, aṅgānām hi rasaḥ.

Word Meanings

te ha - they (the gods); *ucuḥ* - said; *yaḥ* - who; *naḥ* - us; *itham* - thus; *asakta* - joined (to our true selves); *saḥ* - he; *kva nu* - where; *abhūt* - was *iti*; *ayam* - it; *āsye antaḥ* - (is) within the mouth; *iti* - (they decided); *saḥ* - it; *ayāsyaḥ āṅgirasaḥ* - (is) *ayāsya aṅgirasa; aṅgānām* - of the limbs; *hi* - because; *rasaḥ* - (it is) the essence

They (the gods) said, "Where was the one who has thus joined us (to our true selves)? (And discovered), "Here it is within the mouth." (Therefore) the vital force is called *ayāsya āṅgirasa* for it is the essence of the members (of the body).

The most central teaching of Vedanta is - that which transcends both cause and effect is One and it is the same Self that shines in the noumenon as well as the phenomenon. For anything to be, it should have substantiation by the Self. This substantiation is the unifying truth which belongs equally to the noumenon as well as the phenomena. Like the one sun from which countless millions of solar rays are emitted, the one noumenon enters into the phenomenal world and substantiates every shade of manifestation. In the *Bhagavad Gīta* the *paramātman* or the Supreme Self is described as a thread of substantiating existence of value called *sūtra*. Every individuated entity on it, whether physical or non-physical, animate or inanimate is referred to as a pearl of being. Because of this nucleic device which allows life and light to be expressive of its character, everything comes into being. The phenomenal aspect of the thread is of perishable nature *(kṣara)*. It also has an imperishable aspect *(akṣara)*. The ascending and descending logos of which Heraclitus and Plato speak reappears in St. John's Gospel

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as the Word that has become flesh. It comes in the *Bhagavad Gīta* as *praṇava* or *aumkāra*, and in the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* as the quarternion *catuṣpāt* implied in the *praṇava*. In the *Gīta*, Kṛṣṇa identifies himself with the imperishability of the continuing thread in the kaleidoscopic spectrum of phenomenality and its creativity. This thread runs into obscuration again and again. Where it is obscured people think of it as a state previous to manifestation and the Vedantins call it *pragābhāva*. Similarly, after the thread is seen strung with the beads of life, when the beads perish, the thread also becomes invisible. Then it is as if the living being is diffused and becomes extinct. Then again the thread is not known. The Vedantin calls it *pradhvamsābhāva*, the intermediate period of its phenomenal expression. Advaita Vedantins call it *bhāva*, the Viśiṣṭa Advaitins call it *bhāva rūpa* and the Tattva Vādins call it *bhāva rūpa svarūpa*. Ordinary folks recognize the termination of *bhāva* as death *(maraṇa)* but wise people think that death is only a pause *(yama)*.

According to the geneticists, in the case of a given person, the substance of one's being remains dormant in the sperm of the father and ovum of the mother. These come through biologic threads of continuity having different sources such as different genetic trees of families. But when the man and woman mate and the egg of the female is fertilized, two causal yarns are twisted into a single thread. That is the beginning of the embryo. From that moment the growing life in it can be assaulted and terminated by *thanatos* or the destructive negative principle which in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is called *mṛtyu*. When the child is in the mother's womb, the ever-vigilant cluster of *prāṇas* go to every proliferating cell and see that the blueprint in the gene is continuously actualized till the child is ready to leave the mother's womb. The thread continues, in this case literally, in the umbilical chord to which the baby hangs on to protect its life. The string *(sūtra)* comes on its own with the primal cry of the child. It is so significant that the primal cry is made by the mouth and not by the nose. This is like switching on the flywheel of a factory or igniting the furnace of a steel mill. Once it is started it is vigilantly watched over for several years so that the rhythm of breathing is never cut off. All other pulsating principles in the body are governed by this string. It enters into the individuated being as a causal string. Then the causal string remains as a mysterious inner force that controls all the reflexes,

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the genetic code and biologic functions as a subtle *(sūkṣma)* aspect of the string *(sūtra)*. From this develop all our limbs as the substantiating physical material of the gross aspect (*sthūla)* of the string.

Thus we are individually the pearls of priceless worth held together by the universal *sūtrātmā* or causal string referred to in the *Gīta* as *paramātmā*. It is as a *sūtrātmā* that all religions suppose that God dwells in the heart of all. Nowhere in the course of the pilgrimage of life in its biologic history as a living person does it get a little breathing space except in the mouth. The rishi says that all other modified aspects of the *sūtrātmā* are vulnerable for death to enter into. When the *devas* recognized that they had been granted an extended span of life to remain in the body in which individuation occurred, they looked for the cause of the postponement of death. When they recognized it was the neutral aspect of *prāṇa* which could be located in the mouth, it is poetically said that they shouted with joy, "here is the fellow in the mouth" *(ayamāsya)*. In a short form it is called *ayāsya*. As this neutral aspect of *prāṇa* is the essence of all the five *prāṇas* and the essence of all the individual members of the body, the newly discovered redeemer of life is called *āṅgiras*, the essence of the *aṅgās* (limbs).

The body is a corporeal entity in which not only the cells are incorporated into a responsible community; the spirit that comes through the *sūtra* of the cosmic scheme is in every cell as a vigilant onlooker. That is why when a pathologic symptom arises even in the most invisible hideout of the body, restlessness takes hold of the central consciousness and the message is passed through some symptom of pain or malfunction. This is like calling the emergency squad before the forces of death fortify themselves in the area of crisis. Like first-aid given to people who are facing imminent death, the body/mind system has a number of instantaneous devices to fight disease or malfunction. Averting death only means pushing it down the *sūtra* to the terminus of one individuation. Then once again the *sūtra* or thread of life goes from the gross to the subtle, from the subtle to the causal, and changes its principle of radiation. It becomes a causal thread *(kāraṇa sūtra)* to take the essence of one life form to the next life form. That is why in the *Kṣaṇika Vijñāna Vāda* and *Kṣana Bhaṅga Vāda* of the Buddhists an individual is considered as a series and not as a single entity. For instance, when a lamp

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or a candle is burning, the flame of this moment is not the flame of the next moment. The cotton fiber in the wick that burns in this moment burns out so the flame has to be supported by the next fiber. The fat or oil that is burning as the flame at this moment is substituted by another drop of oil or fat. Yet a continuity is seen which is like the continuity of a thread. If there were some efficient gadget to record and reproduce the primal cries we have made at the entrance of every embodied life we have taken, we could probably hear how we cried out a century ago, a thousand years ago, and a million years ago.

The concept of the *sūtrātmā* that runs through all living forms and that runs through the many reincarnations of the same person may look speculative. But those who refuse to admit the plausibility of it should hold themselves responsible to give an alternative explanation. This is not only a matter of faith, but it is also a faith that can be very accurately and cogently reasoned. So please pay heed to it.

Mantra 9

sā vā eṣā devatā dūrnāma, dūram hyasyā mṛtyuḥ; dūram ha vā asmānmṛturbhavati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

sā vai - that very; *eṣā* - this; *devatā* - deity; *dūr nāma* - is called *dūr* (distant); *mṛtyuḥ* - death (is); *hi* - since; *asyāḥ* - from him; *dūram* - away; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *asmāt* - from one; *dūram* - away; *bhavati* - is; *ha vai* - certainly

That very deity is called *dūr* since death is away from it. Death is certainly away from one who knows this.

This mantra reminds us of preventive medicine. The *prāṇa* that initiated the life in a new-born child is very resourceful and strong to pursue all the programs with which a child enters into

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the path of life. Because of its excellence, especially as the essence of all the faculties of the living body and mind, it is far away from the danger of being annulled by death. Hence it is called *dūra*. When we mark distance with a horizontal line in space, that axis has two poles. Each pole is close to some entity. In the present description the distance is indicated to show how far death is from the excellence of the Self. A person who stands close in identity with the universal Self is certainly far from death. On the other hand, a person who is closer to death is far away from the Self. In ordinary bodily life the path between the Self and death is marked with the contexts of birth, growth, change, evolution, deterioration, and death. The natural course of an ordinary person is destined to be a frittering away from the Self to the non-Self, from knowledge to ignorance, and from immortality to death. That means old age, disease and death are imperative in the scheme of nature itself.

Nature is *prakṛti* which is constituted of five elemental bases - space, air, fire, water, earth - and a manifold group of properties belonging to each element. The procreative nature of elements causes many apprehensions in the spirit that is the luminous principle of the body/mind individuation. The pure aspect of spirit is called *puruṣa*. But the *puruṣa* undergoes radical change, like a clear crystal placed on red silk. The colorless crystal immediately becomes reddish in color without anything actually going into the molecules of the crystal to transform it. If the crystal had a consciousness it could recognize its color and say, "I am red." This type of confusion in the psyche of an individual is referred to in this verse as *asman*, i.e., the ego identification projected on the Self. Once this conditioning comes even *sattva* becomes corrupt and helps make the individual feel attached. Attachment becomes even deeper with *rajas* when the three dynamics of ignorance - greed, lust, and revengeful hatred - take possession of the ego. Then infatuation *(aśaktī)* manifests. Infatuation causes spiritual blindness. This becomes even worse when *rajas* becomes coupled with *tamas*. Then confusion becomes confounded. There is a steady drifting towards the horror of death. The more one gives in to the strong pull of infatuation, the more the power of discrimination diminishes. The power of the will to resolve and resist becomes so weakened like in a person whose immunity is in danger. Our present day world is becoming deeply involved in this danger which is now popularly

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called AIDS. This powerlessness, which Śankara calls *durṇāma*, increases day by day. Therefore death is also identified with the maximal laws of discrimination and control.

Although ego-infatuation begins with a joyous feeling, the approach of disease and its gradual intensification bring fear. Infatuation is like a vacuum sucker. A person who is afflicted is absolutely helpless and cannot resist the pull of the sucker. All delights created by the senses and the mind give way to a terrifying panic. This happens in alcoholism, sexual deviation, narcotic addiction, political power craziness, or craving for fame. Arjuna describes it as the strong winds of a typhoon which can drag the ship of the mind away from safe shores to the grave dangers of a stormy sea. It was these disabilities which were making the shining ones lose in the games they were playing with the demonic forces. This aspect is further exemplified in the legends of India in which even gods succumb to the baser passions of life. The king of gods, Indra, is accused of unethical indulgence in erotic culpability. Indra is another name for the mind which overrules the senses *(indriyas)*. When malignancy sets in, a drastic treatment is necessary to save life from a drastic disease.

That is the theme of young Naciketas going to the very citadel of death to know directly from the mouth of Yama what death is. Śankara quotes from the *śruti* that the mark of death is infatuation *(abhiniveśa)* and irresistible attachment *(aśaktī)*. Yama, like the Satan of the Bible, paraded many items of infatuation before Naciketas. In a similar context Mara, the demonic power, used ten kinds of perceptual illusions *(rūpa rāgās)* and ten kinds of conceptual illusions *(arūpa rāgās)* to try to dissuade Gautama Buddha from seeking realization. Only when the Lord overcame the gross and subtle illusions was he blessed with Buddhahood.

Though the individuated Self originates from the universal Self, its tendency is first to fall away, then to regret, and finally to return. This is the theme explicated in the Bible as the fall of man from God, his coming to absolute wretchedness like a prodigal son, returning to the origin and becoming resurrected in the true spirit which is one's true nature. In this mantra it is said that one who knows how far death and ignorance are from the Self and the knowledge of the Self is not claimed by death. Such a one attains immortality.

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Mantra 10

sā vā eṣā devatāitāsām devatānām pāpmānam mṛtyum-apahatya yatrāsām diśāmantastadgamayāṅ-cakāra, tadāsām pāpmano vinyadadhāt; tasmānna janamiyāt, nāntamiyāt, netpāpmānam mṛtyumanvavāyānīti.

Word Meanings

sā vai - that very; *eṣā* - this; *devatā* - deity; *etāsām devatānām* - of these gods; *pāpmānam* - the evil; *mṛtyum* - (which was a form of) death; *apahatya* - removing; *tat* - there; *gamayāñcakāra* - carried; *yatra* - where; *āsām diśām* - of these directions; *antaḥ* - (there was) the end; *tat* - there (it); *āsām* - their; *pāpmanaḥ* - evils; *vinya-dadhāt* - left, deposited; *tasmāt* - therefore; *na* - not; *janam* - to a person; *iyāt* - (one) should go; *na* - not; *antam* - to (that) territory; *iyāt* - should go; *net* - lest; *pāpmānam* - evil; *mṛtyum* - death; *anvavāyānī* - (one) should contract *iti*

That very deity removed the evil of these gods, which was a form of death, and carried it to where there was the end of these directions. There it deposited their evils. Therefore none should go to a person (of that territory) or go to that territory, lest one should contract evil which is a form of death.

In most religions the negative principle of ignorance or darkness or death is considered to be the primary state of the world before light or life and all other manifestations. In Semitic religions and even in some of the Hindu offshoot religions, God as a creator is conceived as existing potentially in the primary cause itself. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* there is no such God mentioned as a causal principle of manifestation. In spite of the universality of death, its occurrence is of a specific nature and it is described as hunger. The characteristics of hunger generate disquietude in the area where nothingness or vacuum is. In spite

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of the negative absolutist character of death its actuality has for its frame of reference a potential entity which can experience the threat of death caused by the vacuity of hunger. It is to meet this conditional aspect that *prajāpati* is devised as a counterpart of hunger. The counterpart of hunger is food. Even when hunger is appeased it does not disappear forever. It only recedes when food is provided. Once the nourishment provided is consumed, like a fire consuming fuel, it again comes back. This is one of the main characteristics of the world of phenomenality, i.e., cyclic or seasonal or periodic recurrence. In the world of manifestation the spirit aspect is called *puruṣa* which has a masculine connotation. The counterpart of *puruṣa* is *prakṛti* which has a feminine connotation and is also called *strī*. *Prakṛti* (nature) is constituted of the three *guṇas* - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The two dialectical counterparts are *sattva* and *tamas* and *rajas* oscillates between the two.

In the first five mantras of this *brāhmaṇa* the *devas* try to repel death through speech, smell, sight, sound and the cognitive power. In all these there are also the influences of *prakṛti*. Therefore the *puruṣa* which is held a captive by *prakṛti*, found that the very faculties which are aimed against death-generating sin are already corrupted with sin. It is through speech that two people relate with each other. It is common experience that people are not satisfied by giving simple statements. Each statement needs many supplementary descriptions, explanations and arguments in defence and persuasion. Ultimately speech wins the relativistic vested interest of the speaker. In the ninth verse it is established that only the *prāṇa* in the mouth, which has no dialectical opposite, could steer past the pitfalls to bring an aspirant to his or her ultimate realization.

If speech belongs to the area of intelligence, smell belongs to instinct. Most living beings are governed by their instincts which are always conjoined with compulsive reflexes. Dogs and bulls do not fall in love with their females out of their admiration for their fair speech or good looks. If you watch when animals mate, you can see an other-worldly look in the eyes of the male as if it does not matter which female he is mating with. For them it is not a romantic experience or a lyrical delight, but it is a compulsive act entirely for the purpose of procreation. Smell generates a compulsion, a hunger for erotic appeasement. Even in vegetative nature we can see this. The flower is the generative organ of plants

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and trees. The fragrance it throws into the wind can bring insects and birds from a far-off area to it to aid in pollination. Even when a man plucks a flower, he instinctively puts it to his nose. According to Carl Sagan and others, there are in the human being the relics of the compulsive behavioral patterns of all the forms of life which have appeared in the evolutionary calendar. In his famous book, *The Dragons of Eden*, a symbolic picture is given of the first male and female having two heritages - one of God their creator and the other of the dragon which interjected into the woman the compulsion of taste and smell by offering the forbidden fruit. Thus nourishment and death go hand in hand.

The third faculty leads into the snare of physical attraction. Except in human beings the male is made attractive to the female with an awesome appearance. As the human female is intelligent, she has the cunning to make herself sexually appealing to the male by painting herself or wearing decorative clothes and glittering ornaments. Where lust alone does not work she adds greed. These days in India most men look for a woman not to have sex with her, but to possess her gold and diamonds. Thus the outward appearance (*rūpa*) becomes the most dangerous. The last of the faculties which remains consistently alluring is the deceptive voice. In the human world the male voice and female voice are very distinct. The cooing musical gentleness of the female voice has certainly an advantage over the bass of the male.

When the *devas* found all these faculties failing in the purpose of avoiding sin they turned to the most neutral of the *prajāpati's* gifts in them which is the *prāṇa* in the mouth. The *prāṇa* in the mouth is coupled with the energy to articulate the principles of emancipation. Thus untruth (*anṛtam*) which clings to words can be burnt away by truth which comes through *manana*, the deepest contemplation of the nature of truth. The process is listening, pondering, and living the truth of perennial wisdom. Perennial wisdom can secure the *puruṣa* or spirit of an embodied person only if he does not trespass the magic circle of wisdom. Symbolically, in the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, to avert the approach of sinful Rāvaṇa to Sīta, Lakṣmaṇa draws a magic circle around her and asks her to keep herself within its confines. Rāvaṇa symbolizes death, or sin, or passionate hunger for erotic pleasure. It was Sīta's disobedience to Lakṣmaṇa's magic circle that brought her peril. The lesson to be learned from this is that there are magic circles around words that are elevating, fragranc-

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es that are associated with noble thoughts, forms which have a sublime influence on one's inner eyes. There are magic circles around proper relationships and the safest behavior pattern is where one exercises restraint. The old proverb says, "An open door will tempt a saint." The break from relativism is almost impossible. It can be done only with a radical attitude such as that of Gautama Buddha leaving his palace, wife and child-to-be, all with a drastic determination not to return. Burning the bridge behind you is a must if you desire not to be pursued by persistent sin.

The two territories of vice and virtue are clearly marked in this mantra. Success comes from sheltered security in the place where one lives and in one's association with people who honor the value of truth against falsehood, existence against non-existence and the perennial against the transient. That is why in the *Crest Jewel of Discrimination*, Śankara recommends *nitya anitya vastu viveka*, the power to discriminate absolutist values in preference to relativistic temptations.

Mantra 11

sā vā eṣā devatāitāsām devatānām pāpmānam mṛtyum-apahatyāthainā mṛtyumatyavahat.

Word Meanings

atha - next; enāḥ - them; *mṛtyum* - death; *atyavahat* - carried beyond (Rest as before.)

That very deity, after removing the evil of these gods which was a form of death, next carried them beyond death.

Mantra 12

sa vai vācameva prathamāmatyavahat; sā yadā mṛtyumatyamucyata so'gnirabhavat; so'yamagniḥ pareṇa mṛtyumatikrānto dīpyate

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Word Meanings

saḥ - the vital force; *vai* - verily; *prathamām* - the foremost; *vācam* - the organ of speech; *eva* - alone; *atyavahat* - carried beyond (death); *sā* - it; *yadā* - when; *mṛtyum* - death; *atyamucyat* - was delivered from; *saḥ* - that, the well-known; *agni* - fire; *abhavat* - (it) became; *saḥ* - that; *ayam* - this; *agniḥ* - fire; *atikrāntaḥ* - having transcended; *mṛtyum* - death; *pareṇa* - beyond; *dīpyate* - shines

Verily the vital force (first) carried beyond (death) the organ of speech, the foremost of the group. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the well-known fire. That fire, having transcended (death), shines beyond it.

In the creation myths of humanity there is a general pattern of the evolutionary meaning of creation. When a person is confused it is normal for him or her to ask, "Why am I here?" "What is the meaning of my life?" as if every item of the corporeal manifestation has a purpose to serve. Biologically we are all bound through the process of reproduction to prior entities of a similar nature which we call parents. And yet, as we grow, some are tall and some are short. Some are lean and some are fat. Some are extroverted and some are introverted. Some are sharp in their intelligence, and some are dull-headed. Life on earth is like running a race. Some are so handicapped that they cannot function normally. Some are so strong-witted and talented that they are recognized by the whole world as matchless persons.

One generation of a historical segment is hardly admired in another segment of history. But there are some illustrious sons and daughters of humanity who have become ever-shining stars guiding the destiny of humankind through ages such as the rishis who have given us the *Upaniṣads* or the prophets who gave us the *Torah*. The Word of Christ today echoes all around the globe. Even the silent smile of Buddha is prized above all other values. When Prophet Mohammed articulated the *Qur'an* the world stood listening with admiration and accepted the truthful ring of the words he spoke. For this reason the *Upaniṣad* says that the first faculty in a person to be redeemed from demonic corruption is the organ of speech with which one can chant the *udgītha*. The

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udīttha is worded with such auspicious intentions that every word is a pearl of priceless worth. We hear with our ears. That is how knowledge percolates into us and meets with its dormant meaning in the very soul of the listener. Here there is a union of the spoken word and its conceived meaning. For that the word has to be fired with the energy of *prāṇa*. Even the strongest man cannot fling a stone into the sky higher than a few hundred meters, but a spaceship can be launched from a space station with the flaming fire of its fuel. A missile can carry the ship into the orbit of its destination. Such high energy can be put into words with the help of *prāṇa*. That is why in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the *prāṇa* and the *vāk* are compared to a couple who please each other.

We have five organs of knowledge (perception), and five organs of action. Both are called *indriyas*. They are complementary to each other like science and technology, or theory and application. The word is received by the ear and the ear prompts the tongue to re-articulate the word just as it is heard. As the origin of the word is from death and hunger, the sparkle of the spirit in a new-born child is only where its curiosity is aroused by sensory stimulation. Therefore its power to discriminate between right and wrong and good and evil is very low. Naturally the child listens to every sound it hears. Automatically the hearing faculty passes the sound of the word with its phonetics and tonality to the organ of speech and the organ of speech imitates. From a very early age, along with the good words we also learn bad words. We learn to speak sweetly and with the same ability the child becomes adept in expressing anger and hatred. That is how death clings to the faculties of action and the faculties of knowledge. Every organ of knowledge passes on its message to its counterpart among the organs of action. In a special way each organ of knowledge has a unique excellence. Meaning is directly related with the faculty of hearing. Thus all other experiences like touch, taste, form and smell, are to be graphically described with words to assign their relevant role in the acceptance of the incoming stimuli and to make them efficient to guide the behavioral actions with which they are intrinsically related.

If descriptive psychology is the special novelty of hearing, the sense of touch is the receiving station in all the five senses. The five organs of action also have a tactual relevancy in their performance. The eye that sees is a counterpart of the sun which is

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honored by the philosophers as the eye of the world. The sun illuminates and the eye responds. It is the faculty of perception which is related with the very center of our universe, the sun, the presiding solar orb of the celestial system to which we belong. Like the ear that hears good and bad, the eye also sees the beautiful and the ugly. Like hearing, seeing also brings strong opposites in the items of attraction and repulsion. Taste and smell require direct contact with the taste buds in the tongue and the olfactory nodules in the nose. In spite of them being so personal and private, they are connected with two elements which are most basic to life, water and earth respectively. So what is tasted by one or smelt by another, if pleasant, can have a universal appeal. In economically advanced countries, if you look for the varieties of eating places, wine shops, and perfume shops, you can see that every shade of taste and smell are catered to in these public places of eating, drinking and smelling.

The universality of the organs of knowledge is complemented in the organs of action. In the organs of knowledge the stimulating energy is flowing in through incoming stimuli, and in the organs of action the energy is outgoing. Through the faculties of knowledge we are corrupted and we express to what extent we are corrupted through our organs of action. How much we know, and how worthwhile our knowledge is, others have no means to know readily unless we communicate with them in words. Even if we have acquired a splendid knowledge through our hearing, seeing, touching, tasting or smelling, the world comes to know only with our sharing through communication. Reputation grows around our attainments, the pursuit of our thoughts and the nobility of our words. Our reputation *(kīrtI)* carries our image beyond time and space. That is what is meant in the eleventh and twelfth mantras which say that the vital breath takes us beyond death. The Upaniṣadic rishis, Lord Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu, the prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ, and Prophet Mohammed lived many centuries ago. But their thoughts are still echoing in the sanctums of all those houses which honor these masters. It is as if they are also part of the family. In fact they are more than that. Buddha is the conscience of a good Buddhist, the Word of the Torah is the conscience of a Jewish person, Jesus is the conscience of a Christian, the Word of the *Qur'an* is the conscience of a Muslim. For the people of India, *śruti*, (what is heard) from the *Upaniṣads*, is

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the norm of truth. For ethical veracity they look into the conclusions of Vālmīki and Vyāsa. Even modern people in India today give easy recognition to the eternal values of the words which came from the hearts of Śri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharishi, Sri Aurobindo, Narayana Guru, and Mahatma Gandhi. The potency of a pure word extolled by the *Upaniṣad* is like the bright sun shining in the firmament of consciousness and showing us the path of truth, love, beauty and justice. The word comes from our thoughts, and our thoughts direct our actions. Therefore when one is pure in thought, word and deed, he or she is certainly the blessed one delivered from the darkness of death and the weariness of living in a corrupt world. So we have to seek the purification that is indicated in this *brāhmaṇa*.

Mantra 13

atha prāṇamatyavahat; sa yadā mṛtyumatyamucyat sa vāyurabhavat; so'ayam vayuḥ pareṇa mṛtyumatikrāntaḥ pavate.

Word Meanings

prāṇam - the nose; *vāyuḥ* - air; *pavate* - blows; (Rest as before.)

Then it carried the nose beyond death. When the latter was delivered from death it became the air. That air, having transcended death, blows beyond it.

We have seen certain implications of the previous mantra as intriguing. The articulated word is vibration in space. It is traditionally believed in India that *ākāśa* or space has only one property and that is vibration. Space as such has no mass and therefore a vibration can occur in it only if a medium fills the space. There are all kinds of vibrations in this world, such as vibrations of air, vibrations in the radiation or conduction of heat, vibrations in liquid and vibrations which correlate molecules of

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metal. We have already pointed out that according to Guy Murchie, who wrote *The Seven Mysteries of Life*, vibration is like a ghost. It has no substance of its own. It enters a substance, disturbs its molecular arrangement and passes away, leaving the medium behind.

In the eleventh and twelfth mantras we looked at the psychodynamics of the word which is generated in space using air as a medium. What is generated is a volume of sound that can have a percussive effect accompanied by tonality on the cochlea of the hearing faculty of the ear. Something immaterial results which is apprehended by the psyche and is not the somatic corporeality of a body. The person who speaks and the person who listens are both affected by a certain suggestion which only a mind versatile in the language in which the word is spoken can recognize. From our daily experiences we know that certain words spoken in a certain tone by a person whom you like or you do not like cause reactions which are either pleasurable or painful. What is spoken of here as pain, sorrow, anger, irritation, etc., enter both in the speaker and in the listener like poison. As they increase, pathological symptoms are shown. Any pathologic malfunction or dysfunction will ultimately become a chronic disposition that can make both persons involved grievously sick and lead them to death.

That is why it is said that the kind of relationship that is established between the faculties of knowledge and faculties of action can either be one which harmonizes human nature or one that is vastly disturbing. When it harmonizes it is looked upon as a divine grace. When it upsets people and causes anguish and anxiety, it is naturally looked upon as demonic. Only a few out of a million people exercise discrimination from an early age and keep themselves spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically healthy. This special care of protection is given to a living being by the very breath of life. Although listeners to an unknown language hear only cacophony, meaningless sounds, the *Upaniṣad* says the word has within it a flaming truth because the substance of the word has a living fire in it. A word that was uttered a thousand or ten thousand years ago can hold its flame within to be meaningful to a member of the human species irrespective of time and clime.

The *Upaniṣads*, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Holy Qur'an, the equations and formulas given by scientists, the

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eternal truth sung by poets and the symphony of music cannot be confined to an area in history or geography, like fire cannot be neatly parcelled and kept in a corner. The flames will sear through the package. That is why in the previous mantra we were told that the word articulated by the tongue, vibrated in the air and heard in the ear of a person assumes a new dimension and significance as a meaning of topical importance.

To that the rishi added another fire that is none other than the sun which shines in the sky. The sun sheds its rays on everything in the world, beautiful or ugly, virtuous or wicked, young or old, of the southern regions or northern regions, of the west or the east, and thus it has a transcending quality. It transcends all boundaries of confinement. Similarly, in the course of time, the words spoken by the rishis, by Buddha, Socrates, Jesus, Valmiki, Vyasa, Confucius or Lao Tzu, shine in the mind of people like the sun illuminating their whole consciousness. Something which is born of this inertial world of matter, with a particular locality in space and a certain moment in time changes into a world phenomena.

In spite of all the separation between country and country, culture and culture, religious faith and linguistic barriers, the sheer worthwhileness of a word makes it adorable to all. Today there is no major language of the world into which the precious words of wisdom in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Gīta*, the Gospels, and the *Qur'an* have not been translated. This is not only true of religious books. Physics, chemistry, botany, and zoology are taught all over the world in different languages, while the subjects remain the same. World classics like Shakespearean drama, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the novels of Victor Hugo, the stories of Chekov, and the writings of Leo Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, have all been translated, read and admired by people who draw inspiration from these world thoughts. That is why the *Upaniṣad* says that first the word becomes a flame and then it becomes a veritable sun of wisdom guiding the destiny of humanity.

After establishing this, the *Upaniṣad* relates two physical phenomena of the world - air and the earth. The property of earth is smell. Smell is more of a physical than a psychic process. Molecules with chemical potencies bombard the olfactory nodules of the nose. This stimulation results in smell. One beautiful aspect of Indian thinkers is that they are thoroughgoing empiricists to begin with. After establishing the empirical

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veracity of a thing, they hold it out as a symbol of highly mythical importance and psychologic significance. Rotten fish smell bad. So they are empiricists when they say rotten fish smell. When they say that in the behavior of a group of people there is something abominable, they say there is something fishy about them. Here they are not actually referring to the fish but to the essence of the quality of the situation. This is how the Indian thinker elicits poetry from science. Poetry appeals not only to the conscious mind, but also to the subconscious and the unconscious. It is the subtle essence of sociobiological negativity that the seers want to purge from the mind of a seeker. Like depth psychologists, they are not mainly observing the words and activities of people, but their concealed urges and dispositions which make them behave in a conceited manner.

Only when the subtle tendency to deceive oneself and others is removed from one's value vision does one become freed from the stink that one smells. Hence it is said that from early childhood we should be able to discriminate between right and wrong. If we offer a lower animal like a cat or dog something to eat, they first smell it. Then they accept or reject it. That is why the elephant-headed god Vināyaka is symbolically given a big proboscis. His trunk is a symbol of great discrimination. He discriminates between the eternal and the transcendent, truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, the Absolute and the relative. Only through that power does one transcend the compelling instinctive urges to follow the particular smell not only of various addictions, but also of other compulsions, not only of one life, but of several lives. That is why the rishi says when we free ourselves from the corrupted fragrances or smells or odors which lead us to certain patterns of action, verbal expression or thinking, this very breath with which we smell becomes the air of the world. It expands to universal dimensions and becomes free of prejudices. This is the most hidden, but laudable meaning which we can read in this mantra.

Mantra 14

atha cakṣuratyavahat; tadyadā mṛtyumatyamucyata sa ādityo'bhavat; so'asāvādityaḥ parena mṛtyumatikrāntaspati.

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Word Meanings

cakṣuḥ - the eye; *ādityaḥ* - the sun; *saḥ asau* - that; *tapati* shines; (Rest as before.)

Then it carried the eye beyond (death). When it was delivered from death, it became the sun. That sun, having transcended (death), shines beyond it.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, like the *Svetasvatāra Upaniṣad*, has a comprehensive character. It alludes to mantras in the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*, *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*. At the very beginning of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* we read that *īśā* envelops the whole world, even the tiniest bit of it. Usually God is considered to be invisible and it is likely for one to speak of God as what is enshrined in everything as the immortal indweller that is substantiating the reality of everything. Instead of interjecting God into the innermost core of this world, the *Īśā Upaniṣad* speaks of it as the most overt reality of the perceptual world. If that is so, then in every sound of this world we are expected to hear the word of God, *nāda brahma*. Similarly, in every touch we are expected to be thrilled by the touch of the Absolute, *brahma sparśa*. In every form we see we are expected to see a version of the divine presence, *īśvara darśana*, and in every taste we get we are expected to taste the blissful elixir of the divine, *amṛtattva*. In every smell we are expected to get the *punya gandha*, the smell of the purified.

We were told that when the eye was asked to do the *udgītha* the demons took advantage of the shadow that goes into the manipulation of forms. Embodied beings are of three-dimensional nature. Sunlight, at least in our empirical experiences of the geometrical figures of the here-and-now relativistic plane, travels straight. Therefore, when it falls on a body, the various contours of the body are specifically illuminated by light on one side with shadow falling on the other side. Because of the contrast of light and shadow, a body is recognized as having not only its own form (*rūpa*) but also its characteristic shape (*ākṛti*). We associate the memories of the shapes of things with the possible or probable action (*kriya*) for which the shape is purposely given to the object of perception. So we are not only seeing the form of a thing, but also the implication of the form and the action that ensues

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from it. The perceptual part of our physical vision becomes immediately complemented with the conceptual correlation that can pull the memory tag of many other connected actions. Thus visual perception is immediately dragged into a matrix of behavioral patterns which is kaleidoscopically complex. It is for this purpose that our scriptures initiate us into the discipline of closing our physical eyes to the world and going into the spiritual purport of forms and shapes.

Every perceptual aspect is mutually related. Forms and shapes are explained by the words we hear. The real purport of a particular name or word which we hear comes when we can meaningfully direct our inner vision to lift our minds from a conditioned reflex into an elevating ideal; thus, the instruction given to us is to listen to the auspicious. As a large part of our body can be tickled with touch which can have a very mundane or base erotic provocation, we are asked to take delight only in the touch of the Absolute. We are asked to cultivate a special ear to listen to the flaming vibration of *ākāśa* which is meant to be only a pure vibration. Then the sky becomes a visible brilliance which we see with our inner eye and all physical forms dissolve in that single brilliance. Whatever sounds make a plethora of imagination of associated ideas or conflicting concepts all dissolve in an undifferentiated music of the *anāhata* which is considered to be the most sweet of musical abstractions so that very little distinction is made between form *(rūpa)* and sound *(śabda)*. Even on the physical plane, when the deepest love is evoked between a couple and they forget themselves in an embrace, their consciousness merges in universal consciousness, the touch of the Absolute *(brahma sparśa)*. From the side of nature or *prakṛti*, *ākāśa* is beyond all physical comparison and therefore it is comparable to the Self *(ātman)*. The Self is also comparable to nothing else but *ākāśa*. Hence we read *gaganasadṛśam*. "identical with the immeasurable sky."

The essence of taste is looked upon as sweet. Here the word "sweet" is only metaphorically mentioned. It does not mean anything like the sweetness of sugar. Sugar is called *pañca sāra*. *Pañca* is five; *sāra* means essence. When we transcend all physical savouring and come to the essence, it is not a sweetness which we physically know; it is identified with the union of the individual Self with the universal Self. The union is called *amṛtattva*. Smell also becomes divine when it is considered to be

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the smell of the *megha vāyu*. The individual soul's love for the Absolute is like a great attraction. When the fragrance of a flower comes from a distant place on the wind, bees and other insects and birds are all attracted to go in the direction from which the smell comes. Similarly, when a teacher of superior wisdom speaks, the fragrance of the meaning of the words comes like a cloud (*megha vāyu*) which leads us. It floats towards the teacher and the aspirant naturally follows the direction of the cloud.

All five senses correlate with each other for the purpose of directing the individual seeker to the collective vision. The collective vision is represented by the sun in the firmament. From there it sheds its countless millions of rays all around the earth to illuminate every object on the face of the globe. Similarly, when the word becomes a conceptual light which is efficient to interpret everything the eye sees, the eye itself becomes like the all-seeing sun. In the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* we see God as the only sight to be seen, and towards the end of the *Upaniṣad*, a man who is about to leave the world looks into the face of the sun and recognizes his own Self image in the sun and says, "O *Pūṣan*, I am that person in the face." Though physically we are not anything more important than a wriggling worm on earth, because of the faculties of perception and the mind elevated by the eternal song of the scriptures, we also become on par with the sky, the air, the sun, the oceans, and the good earth. Such is the lofty meaning of this mantra.

Mantra 15

atha śrotramatyavahat; tadyadā mṛtumatyamucyata tā diśo'bhavan; tā imā diśaḥ pareṇa mṛtyumatikrāntāḥ.

Word Meanings

śrotram - the ear; *tāḥ* - those; *diśaḥ* - directions; *abhavan* became; *tāḥ* - those; *imāḥ* - these; (Rest as before).

Then it carried the ear beyond (death). When it was delivered from death, it became the directions. Those directions, having transcended (death), remain beyond it.

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Religion in Sanskrit literally means that which binds. The binding is effected with many devices. Certain places are considered very sacred to particular religions. People are told of the time-honored legends connected with such places. The Hindus in India consider Kanyākumari, Rameshvaram, Kāshi, Puri, Dwāraka, Haridwār, Rishikesh, and Badrināth as very sacred to them. Even though India has a pre-history dating from less than three to five thousand B.C., people are willing to believe that a Rāma was born in Ayodhya. Once the sense of sacredness is attributed to a place, whether a hill or a river or a place of worship, people shudder to question the validity of it. The Jewish people are sentimentally very attached to Israel and the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. To Christians, Bethlehem and Calvary are sacred. Officially they also cling to the Vatican and the birth and burial places of saints. Muslims adore Mecca and Medina. The Sikhs have their several Gurudwāras.

The solidarity of faith is built on scripture. It is considered blasphemous to examine the verity of a scripture which is believed to be infallible. Although it is said that religions stand for truth, established religions are afraid of truth that can be interpreted against their basic beliefs. Another strong religious bond comes from the congregates of a particular faith. The solidarity of a religious faith is affirmed by the common prayer of the congregates and the rituals that are carried out by the priests of each religion. Even in religions like Islam where no intermediary priest is tolerated between God and the faithful, scholars who can interpret the scriptures are honored and some kind of hierarchical order has come to stay in Islam also. While most religions try to propagate their religion by getting novices to know the scripture, Hinduism stands apart as a religion which has hidden its scriptures from the common folk.

No arena of life is as replete with contradiction as the established religions. When people become obsessively infatuated with "sacred" hills, rivers, rocks, caves, etc., they lose their orientation and think of their particular hill or rock or river as the very center of the world. In Delphi we can still see a stone with which the ancient Greeks marked the center of the world. The great pilgrimages or annual gatherings in places of worship like Puri, the *triveni sangam* at Allāhabād, Tirupati, Śabarimala and Guruvayur, are examples of religious exaggerations which blind people with their hysteric faith in places of worship. In Sanskrit

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it is said that a religious scripture *(grantha)* can be a *granthi*, a knot.

Next in the series come saints, or god-men and god-women, who are held in great reverence as sources of supernatural benefits. If a religious person held in reverence dies he or she becomes a thousand times more venerable. Religious zeal and allegiance to such a person prohibits the believer from accepting any other person who claims similar nobility. Thus instead of love, hero-worship in religion promotes rivalry and hatred. Within a religion there can arise many sects. Śaivites may fight with Vaiśnavites; the hatred between the Sunnis and Shias of Islam is very well known. Even so is the hatred between the Catholics and Protestants. Another source of rancor is the authority of books. What is infallible to one group of people is sheer nonsense and trash to another. The symbol of one religion is a symbol of curse to another. The Star of Solomon is sacred to the Jews and it is an anathema to the Christians and the Muslims. The costumes dear to one religious group are considered uncouth and barbarous by another. It is blasphemous for a Hindu to enter the place of worship with necktie, suit and shoes, and in a Christian church this is most acceptable. Going to an Islamic place of worship without a cap or turban is considered a rebellious act. Thus the habits that are generated around the world through religious teachings have made human beings thrice-bound slaves to tradition and conventional mores. It was to liberate humanity from the tyranny of religion that Victor Hugo wrote his famous novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. There are religions which allow obscenity and even antisocial catharsis as a correct form of worship, whereas in the Puritanic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, an attitude of fear, melancholy, sadness, distress, and self-humiliation are considered most welcome. Thus on the whole a believer is virtually nailed to the cross of his or her belief. A beautiful description of this is given in *Words*, the famous autobiography of Jean Paul Sartre, in which he complains that he could not even recognize the cheerful face of his mother when he saw her in church where she looked melancholic, depressed, and wooden-faced because of her conformity with the other church-goers who were always thinking of the sad crucifixion of Jesus.

In the present mantra of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* we are told that when the ear casts into the wind all inhibitory and

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obsessional injunctions and prohibitions in favor of the ever-widening meaning of true wisdom, it erases all frontiers and allows the mind to flow in all directions. It also allows words of cheer and bubbling joy to enter into one's mind from all sides when the shutters of the mind are fully thrown open. It is as if one has gone to the pinnacle of a mountain and sees a vast panorama in all directions, with the canopy-like sky above, studded with stars and heavenly bodies. The freedom that is spoken of in this mantra is like that of a playful child running unhindered on a beach of soft sand with the infinite range of the ocean spread before him. Those who broke away from conventional traditions and customs, like Moses, Christ, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Nanak and Prophet Mohammed, were all rebellious souls who left the darkness of their people. They transcended death because they all had special ears to hear the whispers of truth and the courage to live the truth they heard. Some of them, like Socrates and Jesus Christ, were physically killed, but the truth they heard in their innermost hearts made them brave and courageous and took them far beyond death. That is why, in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James speaks of people of first-hand experience and people of second-hand belief.

Around their religious scruples or sentiments, people have built great temples of worship with architectural fineness, painted and sculpted artistic displays of enormous physical beauty, and made creative arts of music, operatic songs and liturgies which are all fascinating. But, they have the death touch of the morbidity of the soul. It is from all this travesty that humanity is to be saved by exposing it to the truth which can save every person whose soul is not benumbed by the magic of religion.

Mantra 16

atha mano'tyavahat; tadyadā mṛtyumatyamucyat sa candramā abhavat; so'asau candraḥ pareṇa mṛtyumatikrānto bhāti; evam ha va enameṣā devatā mṛtyumatiwahati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

manaḥ - the mind; *candramāḥ* - the moon; *yaḥ* - who;

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evam - thus; *veda* - knows; *enam* - it; *evam ha vai* - so indeed; *eṣā* - this; *devatā* - deity; *mṛtyum* - death; *atīvahati* - carries beyond; (Rest as before.)

Then it carried the mind beyond (death). When it was delivered from death, it became the moon. That moon, having transcended (death), shines beyond it. So indeed does this deity carry beyond death one who knows thus.

This world is illuminated in the day by the sun and in the night by the moon. We are engaged in our transactions in the day. As we relate ourselves to physical bodies of gross dimensions and it is that part of the world which is controlled by physical, chemical, and empirical laws, we think of it as a world where precision and certainty rule. However, everything we see is not merely the images provided by the sense organs. To make any percept meaningful, it is to be complemented with a concept. Concepts belong to the mind. Although empirical logic comes from the head, the heart has its own feelings and poetically conceived reasons. Therefore the seat of the psyche is more in the heart of a person than in the head. The tides in the ocean are generated by the moon. Even so the emotional flow of a person's heart comes from the mind. Both physiologically and psychologically the heart gives continuity to human life from birth to death. The unbroken rhythm of the pulsation of the heart is called *anāhata*. The *praṇava, AUM,* is a mystical mantra which one can consciously use for one's *udgītha*. Taking advantage of the *prāṇa* and the *apāna*, like the rhythmic sounds of the pulse, lub-dub, the heart has a continuing mantra for *udgāna* called *haṁsa*. The two syllables of the mantra *haṁsa* are like the two wings of an ever-ascending divine bird, the swan (*haṁsa*).

The parameter of the unconscious/conscious aspect of the mind runs from the *mūlādhāra* to the *sahasrāra;* in it, the heart is like a mid-station. Therefore the *udgāna* is consciously or unconsciously always reverberating in the heart. Physiologically the heart has four parts. It also has a circulatory system working on the principle of feeding in and feeding out. The blood circulates in the entire body, carrying with it the animation the organism receives through the mind. The moon has no light of its own; its light is borrowed. Similarly the mind has no light of its own. It is borrowed from the spirit. Therefore it is susceptible to change.

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The *bhāvatrayas* and the meditative aspect of the *praṇava* are lived in the heart every day. The heart has enthusiasm in the forenoon and engages in pragmatic efforts till the night falls. It gathers the memory of the day in the first part of the night, then goes into sleep from midnight to dawn. In sleep it sometimes goes into a deep sleep state of complete absorption or non-differentiation. The first three aspects of mentation are comparable to wakeful perception, aspiring for a tomorrow, and engaging in actions coupled with prospective dreams. Then it goes to the retrospective dream and being more wakeful in the actual dream. The moments of absorption are like *tūrīya*.

In the world we experience the four great seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter. Just as the seasons have their cyclic rotation, there are also cyclic changes of the spirit of the heart. When the heart is joyous, it is like getting exposed to the spring beauty of the world, such as the birth of the golden sun in the east, watching the blooming of flowers and the fluttering of butterflies and bees, listening to the songs of the birds, enjoying the company of dear ones, and making programs for the day. This is also a time when the heart encourages us to sow the seeds of earthly ambitions and heavenly aspirations. The summer season of the mind is when we engage in tireless actions to give meaning to life. Our main transactions are all carried out in the summer of our hearts to secure our future. We are full of expectations and waiting for things to happen. We perspire and become apprehensive of the results of our *karma*. In the autumn season of the heart, we make our stockpiles. We fill our granaries, harvesting the benefits we receive. We may also be assailed by loss and shame. There is also a winter season of the heart when an acute sense of aloneness, if one is spiritual, and loneliness, if one is worldly, comes. We either enjoy the peace of the aloneness or are afflicted with the melancholy of loneliness and rejection.

In the parameter of one's psyche one may remain at the peak of one's joyous spirit like the full moon. Then little by little one may start waning. The motion of the psychic spirit is like that of a figure of eight. Each day the certitude becomes a little dampened with uncertainty and enthusiasm fades. The energy to act becomes less and less until one day the mind comes to a blank darkness like the new moon. Then an ascending pull comes again. Instead of the new moon, the crescent moon comes. Then

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it waxes until it again becomes a full moon.

If a one is consistent in one's *udgāna*, in the attunement of the rhythm and melody of one's heart, the four-fold aspects of the *praṇava* are in unison with the *anāhata* of the *haṁsa*. This enables a person to enter into the sky of consciousness (*cidākāśa*) which is located in the heart lotus (*hṛdayapuṇḍarīka*). Gladdened by the constant humming of the *haṁsa*, the spirit of the heart rises into the *viśuddhi* which purifies all aspirations polluted by irrelevant concepts and the accretions of worldly language. When it ascends to the *ājña*, carrying with it the visions of the soul, such as what manifests in the *paśyanti*, one can transcend even the *ājña* and come to the summum bonum of the highest meaning of life. Then a person becomes endeared by all like a moonstone which nourishes the *cakora*, the mythical bird of higher aspiration. This brings it to the *bhūmavu*. *Bhūmavu* is the Absolute and everything other than that is the *tuccham*, the negligible.

There are two paths before us: the path of the smoky way (*dhūmakaḥ*) and the path of light (*uttarāyaṇa*) which promotes our liberation. Thus the most successful *udgītha* is given in the third *brāhmaṇa* as the *udgāna* of the vital breath (*mukhya prāṇa*) and the most sublime meditation or *udgāna* is given as the *udgītha* practised by the mind. The mind binds us to this world and then we are in *samsāra*. With the *udgītha* of the mind we are released. Then we are in the pathway to *mokṣa* and ultimately we become the liberated (*mukta*).

Mantra 17

athātmane'nnādyamāgāyat; yaddhi kiñcānnamadyate' annenaiva tadyate, iha pratitiṣṭhati.

Word Meanings

atha - then; *ātmane* - for itself; *annādyam* - edibles; *āgāyat* - obtained by singing; *yat kiṁ ca* - whatever; *hi* - because; *annam* - food; *adyat* - consumed; *tat* - that; *anena* - by the vital force; *eva* - itself; *adyate* - is consumed; *iha* - in that; *pratitiṣṭhati* - (it) resides

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Then it obtained edibles for itself by singing. For whatever food is consumed (by creatures) is consumed by the vital force itself, (and) it resides in that food.

From the commencement of the first chapter we found obvious indications that this *śruti*, unlike many scriptures, began with a reasoning based on empirical facts. It avoids crutches such as the concept of a creating God and a created world. Most of the concepts familiar to religion are not resorted to in this presentation of a creation myth. It is a myth not in the sense of a fiction but as reason that stems from the deepest core of human consciousness. Human beings have become alienated from it through the centuries of the development of the human ego. The ego almost obscures the Self of the corporeal world which is replete with a universal spirit of self-generating knowledge and a purposiveness that is always moving towards perfection. The ego acts, so to say, as a demonic cloud obliterating the unity of the Self and consequently the unity of the world. A similar scheme of explanation is resorted to in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*. We also see a strong affinity between the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The concept of the world egg (*hiraṇyagarbha*) is both in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*. We have already explained how the egg is a symbol of dual principles - a thesis and an antithesis - which, when polarized, dialectically cancel each other out, giving rise to a synthesis.

The initiative of the active commencement of life comes with the primal scream of the child which announces the manifestation of a person. It takes the message in all directions and the person becomes established as a reality in the time/space world of embodied beings. The primal scream is very similar to the self-protective scream which came from the first-born being which cried *"bhāṇ!"* to death which was about to devour it. The primal scream of the child is not merely protective. It makes a demand for immediate nourishment and initiates its respiratory system into action. The new-born child wants both food for its hungry mouth and vital breath to enter its nostrils and fill the whole body with invigorating energy. Its outgoing breath becomes air and the meaning of the scream becomes the fiery flame of the word. The very first word uttered by the child in the form of the scream makes sense to everyone around and makes par-

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ents aware of their responsibility. The scream also starts the functioning of the organism, at first physiologically and almost immediately psychologically. The first listener to the word is the child itself. Even before the eye opens to see the world the sound reverberates in the ear and the new-born is given its initial orientation.

Then the eye opens and the child sees the world of infinite space and the far-off horizon set as the stage on which its life is to be commenced. Its breath becomes the air and fills the entire cosmos. The word becomes the fire in the sun. The vision of the eye projects it into the cosmic illuminator. Thus the coordination of the faculties is not only established in the person, but the person also becomes a miniature microcosm having a liaison between the cosmic phenomena of the earth, water, fire, air and cosmic space. The outer sun becomes a reality of the person's visualizing eye and the outer air becomes a constant reality in the nostril that inspires and expires vital breath. The word that issues out of the mouth is heard and is recommended by the ear to be broadcast to the world. Thus there is a meaningful interlacing of the miniature faculties all studded in a living body and an extrapolation of the same to project the reality of the cosmos on a wider canvas. The entire scheme of the *Upaniṣad* is epitomized in mantra seventeen in which the basis of projection is emphasized as hunger which seeks food. The grand economy of nature is presented in the provision of one gate for the intake of food which is then dexterously channeled into the multitudinous cavities of hunger that await periodic replenishing. Then every cell, every tissue, every faculty is rejuvenated and made strong to carry out the assignments allotted to each member of the living organism, however humble its place in the world order.

Just as there is a polarization of the sperm and the yolk in an egg, a bipolarity is established after the maturing of the person in which the faculties of the head are mainly conceived for the person's transactions with the psycho-physical world and those of its heart to deal with the animating spirit. The psycho-chemistry of the living organism has for its functional scheme of reference a hierarchy of positive values and a hierarchy of negative values. Positive values are structured around the joyous or blissful foundation of the Self which finds an existential verity in its cognitive ascertainment of the correlation of facts. Its counterpart continues to monitor its position from the seat of death

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which eventually undoes every temporary creation back into the negativity of nothingness. This cancellation of everything created is only to regenerate the same on another occasion with a new mode which surprisingly reappears with evolutionary improvements. Such is the science of *brahmavidyā* that is presented in this mantra.

Mantra 18

te devā abruvan, etāvadvā idam sarvam yadannam, tadātmana āgāsīḥ, anu no'asminnanna ābhajasveti; te vai ma'bhisamviśatetī; tathetī, tam samantam pariṇyaviśanta. tasmadyadanenānnamattī tenaittāstṛpyanti; evam ha vā enam svā abhisamviśantī, bhartā svānām śreṣṭaḥ pura etā bhavatyannādo'dhipatirya evam veda; ya u haivamvidam svesu prati pratirbubhūṣati na haivālam bhāryebhyo bhavati; atha ya evaitamanu bhavati, yo vaitamanu bhāryānbubhūrṣati, sa haivālam bhāryebho bhavati.

Word Meanings

te - those; *devāḥ* - gods; *abruvan* - said; *idam yat* - whatever; *annam* - food (there is); *sarvam* - all; *etāvat* - (is) this much; *vai* - only; *tat* - that; *ātmane* - for yourself; *āgāsīḥ* - (you) have obtained by singing; *anu* - under; *asminn anne* - in this food; *naḥ* - us; *ābhajasva* - make sharers *iti*; *te* - you who are so inclined; *vai* - verily; *mā* - me; *abhisamviśata* - sit around *iti*; *tathā* - very well *iti*; *tam* - it; *parisamantam* - around; *nyaviśanta* - sat down; *tasmāt* - hence; *anena* - through the vital force; *yat* - what; *annam* - food; *atti* - (one) partakes of; *tena* - by that; *etāḥ* - these (gods); *tṛpyanti* - are satisfied; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *enam* - him; *evam* - thus; *ha vai* - verily; *svāḥ* - kinsmen; *abhisamviśanti* - sit around; *svānām* - of his relatives; *bhartā* - support; *śreṣṭhaḥ* - best; *puraḥ* - in front; *etā* - goer; *annādaḥ* - eater of food; *adhipatiḥ* - chief; *bhavati* - (he) becomes; *sveṣu* - among kinsmen; *yaḥ u ha* - any one who; *evamvi-*

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dam prati - with such a knower; *pratiḥ bubhūṣati* - wants to compete; (*saḥ* - he) *bhāryebhyaḥ* - towards dependents; *alam* - capable; *na* - not; *hi eva* - certainly; *bhavati* - becomes; *atha* - but; *yaḥ eva* - whoever; *etam* - him; *anubhavati* - follows; *vā* - or; *yaḥ* - who; *etam* - him; *anu* - under; *bhāryān* - dependents; *bubhūrṣati* - wants to support; *saḥ* - he; *ha eva* - indeed; *bhāryebhyaḥ* - towards dependents; *alam* - capable; *bhavati* - becomes

The gods said, "Whatever food is there amounts only to this much, and you have obtained it all for yourself by singing. Now make us sharers of this food." "Well, then," (said the vital force), "sit around facing me." "Very well," (said the gods), and sat down encircling it. Hence any food that one partakes of through the vital force satisfies these gods (the organs). So do his kinsmen sit around facing him who knows thus; he becomes the support of those kinsmen, the best among them, their guide and chief, and he is a good eater of food. Any one among his kinsmen who wants to compete with such a knower is certainly incapable of supporting his dependents. But whoever follows him, or wants to support his dependents under him, is alone capable of doing so.

We began with the physical cosmology of the universe with the horse or *aśva* presented as the symbol of outer space, the biosphere and the terrestrial plane. Then the biologic dimension was added to physics and thus the chemistry of life was included. Our interest became well implanted in biophysics and biochemistry. Then one more dimension was added by bringing in the factor of consciousness. Our field of study became enlarged to include psycho-biology with its subsections psycho-bio-physics and psycho-bio-chemistry. In this mantra, the system becomes more comprehensive with the meaning of the sociological dimension of life. The fight for supremacy between the bright aspects of life, the gods, and the dark aspects of life, the demons, gave an occasion for trying out which of the five senses and the mind was the most superior in averting death. They all failed and their *udghānas* were of no avail. Unsatiated hearing brings only

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samsāra. The more and more one hears about oneself, the more self-love becomes a thirst to hear more about one's own glory. That was the back door through which the demons could enter into the faculty of hearing and defeat its *udghīta*. The ear heard not only the ego's praises but also the blemishes. Like life and death, praise and shame caught the listening ego on the horns of vanity. The faculty connected with air is touch. Touch had the pride that it was the touch from the drum of the ear, the receptors in the fingers and the genitals, the touch of the light rays on the rods and cones of the retina, the touch on the layer of skin on the tongue with taste buds and the touch on the olfactory nodules in the nose. These are all part of touch. Thus of all the senses, touch is the most infatuating. Both pleasure and pain are part of touch. So the biggest defeat was of the faculty of touch.

Then came the faculty of seeing. Of all the snares that can catch a person, the sense of sight is the most disarming. Even a scientist would say, "To see is to believe." Optic illusions are partly responsible for making the world an arresting phenomena. Without the bright and dark coming together there is no sight. Thus darkness became an invited guest in the creation of all phenomena. Human beings are born out of water and water is the essence of life. It is also the greatest solvent. Taste, depending on water, is the gateway to death. Ultimately there is smell. Smell has the disadvantage of reaching anything which is far and yet it can take with it the essence of instinct and the genetic summation of life from one life to the next life. All these are equally blessed and cursed. Mind is superior to all the senses, but the deception of all the five senses becomes cumulative in the mind. Therefore the failure of the mind is more devastating than the failure of the senses.

Only the *mukhya prāṇa*, the chief among vital forces, was free from illusions and attachment. It never expressed itself. It remained always as the generous giver of energy to all related to it. It is this chief of vital energies that ultimately succeeded in pushing death very far and also in taking life to the region of undisturbed peace and to the nobility of harmonizing itself with everything. The system of the world order is maintained with such ingenuity that all are provided with food and life breath. The vital breath was finally discovered in the mouth as superior breath so it was christened *ayāsya*, dextrous, valiant. The mind

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is a big sharer, but it has shared all the good and evil of the senses. The *ayāsya* holds in its chalice the essence or elixir of the good of every component part that goes into the physical, chemical, biological, psychological and spiritual aspect of the whole embodied person. That is how it became *āṅgirasa*. The senses and the mind recognized that *ayāsya āṅgirasa* has food for all which it earned with its own effort. It is worthy of being adored. You can ask for boons from it because it is *varenya*.

The vital force (*āṅgiras)* is like a serpent with five heads which from its head to its tail is filled with the energy of life. It is through its mouth that the faculty of hearing hears the sound from the tinkling of a bell to the unbroken music of *nāda brahma* (*anāhata*). It is through its mouth that the faculty of touch becomes alerted to act as a universal receptor good enough to make a jerk by habitual conditioning or experience the orgasmic consummation of love. It is through its mouth that the eye sees the world panorama illuminated by the light of the sun, the light of the moon, fire, sound, touch, and the light of the Self. The last of these can overcome the phenomenal world to be united with the noumenal. Through the mouth of the *āṅgirasa* the tongue gets its *rasa*. The *rasa* can be tasted in its mouth, the *rasa* can be heard as a musical symphony, the *rasa* can be seen as beauty. The erotic *rasa* is the most overwhelming. Ultimately fragrance can be made a continuator of the *rasa* in many lives to come. The mind has its comprehensiveness because what is perceived by the five heads and deposited in the body of *āṅgirasa* to the very tip of its tail is the memory storage retained intact to the very last moment of life.

The senses and the mind know that they cannot exist without *āyasya āṅgirasa*. They all submit themselves to the *mukhya prāṇa*. They recognize in it the chief, the most independent and autonomous power in life. This is the beginning of the sociological system of the ruler and the ruled, the commanding principle and the attitude of obedience. The idea of equality is only a product of rational speculation. This is very well emphasized in the eighteenth mantra. Where there is the ruler and the ruled there automatically comes the petitioner and the responding authority. Between them comes the social contract proclaiming rights and privileges and also allegiance and loyalty. The ruler should provide at least two mainstays of life - food and safety from the danger of death. The *mukhya prāṇa* provides all with food and *prāṇa*

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which are the two main securities of life. The five elements in the microcosm and the five elements in the macrocosm are in good liaison when such security is invulnerable. The first model of embodied manifestation was the appearance of *prajāpati*. The first model of replication and continuity was *āyasya āṅgirasa* which, when it becomes manifold, can also be called *bṛhaspati*. Now we get the first Upaniṣadic model of individuals becoming united to form a society and thus the law of corporate life is presented to us in the most silent manner in the *brāhmaṇa*.

Mantra 19

so'yāsya āṅgirasaḥ; aṅgānām hi rasaḥ; prāṇo vā aṅgānām rasaḥ; prāṇo hi vā aṅgānām rasaḥ; tasmādyasmātkasmāccāṅgātprāṇa utkrāmati tadeva tacchuṣyati, eṣa hi vā aṅgānām rasaḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ - it; *ayāsyaḥ āṅgirasaḥ* - (is) *ayāsya āṅgirasa*; *aṅgānām* - of the limbs; *hi* - for; *rasaḥ* - (it is) the essence; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *vai* - verily; *aṅgānām* - of the members; *rasaḥ* - (is) the essence; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *hi vai* - indeed *aṅgānām rasaḥ*; *yasmāt kasmāt ca* - from whichever; *aṅgāt* - limb; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *utkrāmati* - goes out; *tat* - that; *tat eva* - there itself; *śuṣyati* - dries up; *tasmāt* - therefore; *eṣaḥ* - it *hi vai anganam rasah*

It is called *ayāsya āṅgirasa*, for it is the essence of the limbs (of the body). The vital force is verily the essence of the limbs. It is indeed their essence. If from any limb the vital force goes out, it dries up there itself. Therefore it is indeed the essence of the limbs.

Life is a process which implies many functions, both of creation and dissolution. Nature is the overseer and the monitor of all the functions of the vast world of vegetables, from the humblest

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grass to the mighty oak. If you study the cell life of the lower forms of life, especially of the botanical world, you can see that the day to day engineering of new sprouts, maintenance of whatever has already manifested and the meticulous removal of devices which no longer promote the sustenance of life are all carried out with great ingenuity, a natural sense of economy and an implied responsibility. Nature's managerial function shows greater ethical justice than the conscious and deliberate management done by humans. For example, when a leaf is sprouting on the topmost branch of a huge tree, the vital energy functioning in the tree behaves as if it knows exactly when that leaf should sprout, to what size and shape it should grow, how long it should function, when it should become pale and withered and fall off the tree. Until then, the vitality for sustenance will be sent from the root buried in the ground through an ascending sap all the way to that particular leaf with as much care as a mother gives to her child. In lower forms of life which depend entirely on the vital energies of nature, this mothering principle has no sentiment or attachment like a human mother. Once the need is fulfilled by any cell, leaf, flower, or fruit, or even the bark or branches, the vital essence will be withdrawn and it will automatically perish.

The vital energy has been maintaining life in all its variegated forms with a biologic history that runs into millennia. No form of life is outside the scheme of the world order. Nature's maintenance shows the omnipresence of a caring benevolence which supplies the vital energy required in the right quantum. It increases the supply according to the need of each organism. Thus nature maintains the unwritten principles of a socialistic principle within its ambit: to each according to its need and from each according to its ability. The omnipresent factor of the vital force that maintains a system seems to know the need of each functionary of the body and that is taken care of. This explains nature's insight into the need of all. From each according to its ability is a functional engineering of production, maintenance, and dissolution. Where the organism is incapable of knowing its need, nature steps in. For example, when a nucleus in an egg is slowly maturing, it has no ability of its own to manipulate and utilize the yolk for its nourishment. The appropriate materials that need to go into the making of each limb, such as the beak, the eye, the ear, the digestive system, and feathers, are all in the know-how of nature. The bird is fully equipped before it breaks

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the shell and comes out. Once the chick is out, nature allots a good amount of self-responsibility to it to look for its food and peck whatever edible food it sees. Thus there comes a sharing between the animal's instinctive intelligence and nature's provided equipment.

We see nature's provision taken to another degree when, in the place of the egg, we see a child growing in the womb. A very complex corporeal body is magnificently made by nature. Once the child is out of the mother's womb, nature prompts the parents to give affectionate parental care to the child. The child itself also has to be responsible with its deliberation to efficiently employ all its limbs to lessen first the work of nature and secondly the care of its parents. In the previous mantra we saw the initiation of life on earth into a sociological system; here we see how it becomes a contract suitable to be worked out in the phases of childhood, youthful maturity, middle age, and the degenerative old age which moves the being on to its final extinction.

A scientist's insight into the biology, psychology, and sociology of the growth and changes of a purposive and evolutionary nature is presented in this mantra. The special aspect of the vital force has many phases, some of which are secretly kept away from us and some are generously shared with us. To a casual reader the mantra means nothing. As Will Durant says in his *Story of Civilization*, the *Upaniṣads* can be seen as puerile baby talk. However, we feel gratified that it gives us an ocean of insight into the enormous strides which the biologic principle has made in its onward history, from primitive beginnings to its present highly sophisticated complexity. It is with such kind of insight that we should rate the two aspects of the vital breath *(ayāsya āṅgirasa)*. *Ayāsya* is present in the mouth of every cell which is ready for intake and *āṅgirasa* is the replenisher of the energy which gives the right kind of formation to every part of the functional organism. These are some of the secret aspects of the *Upaniṣad* which has merited it to get the name *Upaniṣad*, meaning 'the secret doctrine of the Absolute' *(rahasya śastra)*.

Mantra 20

eśa u eva bṛhaspatiḥ; vāgvai bṛhatī, tasyā eṣa patiḥ. tasmādu bṛhaspatiḥ.

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Word Meanings

eṣaḥ - this; *u* - again; *eva* - itself; *bṛhaspatiḥ* - (is) *bṛhaspati*; *vāk* - speech; *vai* - verily; *bṛhati* - (is) the meter *bṛhati*; *eṣaḥ* - this (is); *tasyāḥ* - its; *patiḥ* - lord (sustainer); *tasmāt* - therefore; *u* - again; *bṛhaspatiḥ* - (this is) *bṛhaspati*

This itself is again *bṛhaspati* (sustainer). Speech verily is *bṛhati*, and the vital force is the lord of speech. Therefore this is again *bṛhaspati*.

The *Upaniṣad* begins with the all-enveloping negativity of the silence of death. Death is marked with darkness and fear. The counterpart of darkness is light. Death is counterbalanced by birth. The first model of rebirth was presented as *prajāpati*. *Prajāpati* proved itself to be mortal. In the phenomenal world mortality can be transcended only with rebirth. Rebirth can be accomplished only by channelizing energy into a new formation which is to be conceived by ideation.

Prāṇa is the lord of life. It is the lord of nourishment and the senses and the mind. When there was a fight between positivity and negativity, *prajāpati* aspired to continue its being with an appropriate form of life. That resulted in the *ayāsya āṅgirasa*, which means the one that can be in the becoming of all the essences of life in countless forms. When the One became many, to incorporate the many into a social unit, communication between each member of the corporation became an absolute necessity. Communication can come only by articulating words. In this world every form is named. Therefore there are as many nouns as there are forms. Things act and therefore to communicate about the function of things there have to be verbs. In one single thing there can be many qualities of merit and demerit worthy of being mentioned. So every noun is to be supplemented with many adjectives. There can be face to face communication and indirect communication. Face to face communication brings first person and second person. For indirect communication there has to be third person. These account for pronouns. Actions can be commendable or they can be non-meritorious. For this there should be adverbs. When an emphasis is needed articles come.

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When more than one are put together, conjunctions come. Every speech is to relate something to something else. This necessitates prepositions.

When we come to living beings, there are males and females, and there can be objects without gender. That brings categories of gender. Number is also another factor. Thus the basics of the syntactical science of grammar come. The simplest pulsation of a brain is a judgement. A subject can be presented only by predicating something about the subject. The predicate can be an affirmation or a negation. Sentences can be formulated with one word, two words, three words, or many words. In society, with its individuated inner consciousness and socialized exterior environment, there can be silent ponderings and articulated expressions calling the attention of another to associate or disassociate. All these are done with an articulated word. Afterwards, formal symbols like the sound symbols of articulated words were made to indicate names.

Thus formalism, written word, and nominalism, spoken word, came from two sides and became a confection of human expression. These expressions happen to be of three classes. The first comes because, on finding a superior, people want to praise. The second is that after praising, petitions are made to the superior. For this one has to be very articulating. This aspect of supplication is called *ṛk*. After securing the confidence of the superior, the dependents offer their voluntary services to carry out the intentions of the superior. Here the person who places himself or herself at the disposal of the superior does not make any claim of original vision or intention to act. He or she is not one who knows, but one who is told, not the one who has heard, but the one who simply carries out the instruction, an instrument (*nimitta*). Third, after having secured the favor of the superior, one is filled with gratitude and in a mood to sing the praises of the superior. So from *yajña* or *yajus* he comes to the *sāma*. In this way both the life of the superior and inferior get a meaning.

The three *Vedas*. *Ṛk*, *Yajus*, and *Sāma*, are symbolized by *A*, *U*, and *M*, which constitute the three syllables of the mystic mantra *AUM* or *praṇava*. *Ṛk*, *Yajus*, and *Sāma* are based on the triple nature modalities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The three *guṇas* do not function the same way in everyone, so there are individual variations with psychic coloration known as *varṇa*. That also becomes the basis for inequality in social life. The *devas* and *asu-*

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ras who were fighting continue to fight. The *ayāsya* and the *āṅgirasa* only succeeded in pushing death and negativity a little away from being an imminent danger.

The *A*, *U*, and *M*, of *praṇava* are suggestive of the wakeful, dream, and deep sleep, or empirical transaction, mentation, and causal propensities. There is another aspect in *AUM* which is the silence that follows *A*, *U*, and *M*. On the relativistic plane, a person may achieve many relativistic merits, such as of making one's action potentials a channel to serve humanity, socializing people to have happy homes, educating children by founding schools or homes of literature in libraries, or developing engineering skills, therapeutic ability or administrative powers, thus engaging in that which makes this empirical world of ours pragmatically efficient. But after all this one may become dissatisfied. A person can see everything in this world and come to know the realization of even the far-off stars, but forget to ask the fundamental questions, "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" When one finally comes to this, one goes beyond the *veda* and finds another kind of silence which transcends death. In the very word with which the edifice of the crumbling world has been built, another potential in seen in which every sound has a four-fold function. This brings one back to the very foundation of language, and one begins to know how an idea expands into an expression. This is the epitomization of *AUM*, a quarternion with four limbs (*catuṣpāt*).

The old verses of the scriptures with lines of eight syllables form verses of four lines. Each line has two halves. Each half has four syllables. The fourth syllable is to indicate a termination. Thus from syntactics we can go into rhetorics. From the relativistic logic which brings us to the rational world of pragmatics, we can withdraw into the meditative silence which can purge us of all imagination and establish us in pure consciousness (*sthitha prajña*). When there is no distinction between the individual and the Absolute, one is established in the Absolute, *brāhmi sthiti*. When one is a *bhakta*, in continuous contemplation of one's real Self, one is no longer a seeker, but a knower (*jñāni*). All the dismembered parts are conjoined (*yoga arudha*). The many are replaced by the one (*kevalam*), bringing the state of *kaivalya*. One transcends the modalities of nature (*guṇātīta*) and is no longer caught in the orbital cycle of birth and death.

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Mantra 21

eṣa u tva brahmaṇaspatiḥ; vāgvai brahma, tasyā eṣa patiḥ, tasmādu brahmaṇaspatiḥ.

Word Meanings

eṣaḥ - this; *u* - again; *eva* - itself; *brahmaṇaspatiḥ* - (is) the lord of *brahman*; *vāk* - speech; *vai* - verily (is); *brahma* - the Absolute (*yajus*); *eṣaḥ* - this (is); *tasyāḥ* - its; *patiḥ* - lord; *tasmāt* - therefore; *u* - again; *brahmaṇaspatiḥ* - (this is) the lord of *brahman*

This itself is also the lord of *brahman* (*yajus*). Speech is verily *brahman* (*yajus*), and the vital force is its lord. Therefore this is again the lord of *brahman*.

We have already mentioned that any study or activity to which one resorts should have four basic principles. One is the purpose for which the study or action is undertaken. That is the epistemology or subject matter of the study. Any action is only the application of the knowledge connected with the epistemology of the search. The epistemology is called *viṣaya*, and the pragmatics or *prayojana* is the goal towards which we go. The goal is connected to an actualization of a value. Therefore the *prayojana* in its purest form is axiology. The mode of conducting an inquiry or the *modus operandi* of an action should be based on the right kind of method. So three fundamentals which are recognized both in the sphere of knowledge and the sphere of action are epistemology, methodology, and axiology. For any study, whether theoretical or practical, to be performed, one should have a basic understanding of what is inquired into, how the inquiry is conducted, both theoretically and practically, and to what use value the knowledge or action leads. One should also have a competence that puts one at ease with epistemology, methodology, and axiology. Competence is called *adhikāra*.

To learn a language one has to perceive the forms of things and also conceive the properties implied in the content of the

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form. The form which is before the visual faculty is *pratyakṣa*. When a formal recognition of a body is complemented with the properties of its content, it gives one an abiding concept of the percept *(pratibha)*. For every word one comes to know, one should have a corresponding concept in one's mind. Two concepts can be combined for the practical result of creativity. One should have a clear notion of which two things can be conjoined, and what cannot be conjoined. The underlying principle for conjunction is a principle of homogencity. Water can be combined with milk. The homogeneous principle in water and milk is the liquidity of both. A nail can be struck into a wall provided the wall is made of wood or mud. You cannot strike a nail in a piece of granite. The same is also true in the bringing together of consonants. When you bring together more than three consonants the tongue refuses to articulate. But if you put vowels in between the consonants, the tongue is able to articulate them all.

Even when you articulate a word, if the word does not have a supportive concept in your mind, the phonetics alone do not make any sense. You can articulate "abracadabra" but you do not have a concept for it, so it does not make any sense. But you can say something quite similar such as "April" and "Cadbury." Then it almost makes sense. You know April is a month, and Cadbury is chocolate. Still you do not come to any logical conclusion. Your friend might say, "I shall offer you a Cadbury on the first of April." But you do not believe him because April First is Fool's Day. He may be saying this just to pull your leg. So you ask, "Will you give me a Cadbury on April 2nd?" If he says, "Yes," he has committed himself. It has a pragmatic finality.

This is how the world of words can be an articulating currency to carry out the transactions of life. Transactions come with the dynamics of consciousness which accompany the arrangement of words. If it is a repetitive process of consciousness such as "You insulted me, you insulted me," or "I love you, I love you," it is a compulsive eddy of thought *(cinta)*. In the first example, consciousness is accompanied by an attitude of revengeful hatred, and in the second, an erotic obsession. But if you are a sober person developing an argument by going from a major premise to a minor premise, and from a minor premise to a conclusion, and if the conclusion is a universal law, by applying it to a specific instance you can formulate another logical syllogism. This kind of progressive search uses the linear aspect of

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language *(vicāra)*. If you want to find out the deeper significance, you return from the periphery of the word's literal meaning to its hidden suggestibility. When you go very deep, you are pondering or contemplating *(manana)*. If that ultimately brings you to the meaning of the subject/object relationship and finally to an effacement of the duality of subject and object, you have come to an at-one-ment *(dhyāna)*.

The whole scheme of language thus moves from simple enlargement to an oratorical function, and from there to a comprehensive achievement of the transactional purposiveness of language. The first of the three stages is called *bṛhatī*, which is characteristic of a Vedic poetic meter called *candas*. When one goes from there to the offering of praise, or to making statements, one comes to *bṛhaspati*, the Lord of Speech. When it becomes action-oriented with speech as the monitoring directive, we arrive at *brahmaṇaspatī* which can combine sound, form, signs, tonal symbols, formal symbols, gestures, postures, static schemes and motor schemes. For all these we rely on our memory. Memory is a treasure house in which the correlations of concepts and percepts are kept in storage. Memory tags are pulled in correspondence to the consonants and vowels which are conveniently coordinated. For coordination there has to be a sequential articulation with the interspacing of pause or silence, and also the prolongation or shortening of sounds.

Thus in the system science of the *Upaniṣad* we go from the system of *prajāpati* to *ayāsya āṅgirasa (prāṇaspati)*, *prāṇaspati* to *bṛhaspati*, and *bṛhaspati* to *bramaṇaspati*. Two corresponding systems function with a binary harmony. One is in the physiological function of the person in which electromagnetic conductions of energy are accomplished with the devices of acceleration and control. Its counterpart is the coordinations in mentation which come from the self-luminous consciousness of the individuated Self. Whatever is achieved through this system, if recorded in an indelible medium, or perpetuated through the memory of posterity, remains for ever. That basis of the world of words is called *akṣara*. The Science of Absolute *(brahmavidyā)* is established on the imperishable sound *akṣara*. In the Platonic and Christian concepts *akṣara* is equivalent to the Logos or the Word. Such is the elaborate study to which we come in this mantra.

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Mantra 22

eṣa u eva sāma; vāgvai sā, amaiṣaḥ; sā cāmaśceti tatsāmnaḥ sāmatvam. yadūeva samaḥ pluṣiṇā, samo maśakena, samo nāgena, sama ebhistribhirlokaiḥ, samo'nena sarveṇa, tasmādūeva sāma; aśnute sāmnaḥ sāyujyam salokatām ya evametatsāma veda.

Word Meanings

eṣaḥ - this; *u* - again; *eva* - itself; *sāma* - (is) *sāman*; *vāk* - speech; *vai* - verily (is); *sā* - *sā*; *eṣaḥ* - this (is); *ama* - male; *sā* - female; *ca* - and; *itī* - because (it is); *tat* - therefore; *sāmnaḥ* - of *sāman*; *sāmatvam* - the reason of being called *sāman* (is well known); *yat u eva* - or just because (*saḥ* - it); *pluṣiṇa* - to a white ant; *samaḥ* - (is) equal; *maśakena* - to a mosquito; *samaḥ* - equal; *nagena* - to an elephant; *samaḥ* - equal; *ebhiḥ* - these; *tribhiḥ* - three; *lokaiḥ* - to worlds; *samaḥ* - equal; *anena sarveṇa* - to all this (universe); *samaḥ* - equal; *tasmāt* - therefore; *u eva* - indeed (*saḥ* - it); *sāma* - (is) *sāman*; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *etat* - this; *sāma* - *sāman*; *veda* - knows; *sāmnaḥ* - with *sāman*; *sāyujyam* - identity; *salokatām* - residence in the same world; *aśnute* - (one) attains

This itself is again *sāman*. Verily speech is *sā*. It is called *sāman*, because it is *sā* (female) and *ama* (male). Or else the vital force is *sāman*, just because it is equal to (the size of) a white ant, equal to a mosquito, equal to an elephant, equal to these three worlds, equal to this universe. One who knows this *sāman* attains identity with the *sāman* or residence in the same world with it.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is in many respects conceived as a counterpart to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. It is the final portion of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* which is integrally connected with the *Mādhyaṁdina* and *Kāṇva* branch of the *Yajur Veda*. The *Chāndogya* comes as a posterior Vedanta text of the *Sāma Veda*.

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In the previous mantras we were considering the implications of *ṛg* and *yajus*. In the present mantra we are passing onto the *sāma*. In the very opening chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the *ṛg* and the *sāma* are considered as counterpoints such as in music. All the *Upaniṣads* are conceived in dialectical modes - the rishis are very much drawn to the conjunction of opposites such as in the relationship of male and female spouses. In the *Chāndogya* it is said that *vāk* and *prāṇa*, word and vital force, are like a couple. They gladden each other through their union. In the present mantra *sā* stands for the female and *ama* for the male. *Sā* is speech and *ama* is vital force. When a man and a woman embrace each other and they are at the height of orgasmic ecstasy, they neither think of themselves nor each other, their identity *(sāyujya)* is so complete. Therefore it is unnatural to separate the *ṛg* (verse) from the *sāma* (song).

The vital force *(prāṇa)* dwells in all beings in the same way irrespective of whether human beings rate them as beneficial or non-beneficial. The *rishi* here employs a technique of homogenization by equating a white ant, a mosquito, an elephant, the three worlds and the universe as all belonging to the same order of functional reality of the world. We have already seen how everything recognized by the cognitive mind has a connative name for recognition and how the affective value of each such recognized item is duly placed along with the rest in a hierarchical vision of values. What is cognized and recognized is the basis for predication and the affection arising from it is what impels the cognitive agent to feel exalted and sing his value appreciation. That is why in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the *ṛg* and the *sāma* are bracketed.

In the present mantra we see the same bracketing of *ṛg* and *sāma*. As the *ṛg* is tuned for singing in the *sāma*, the different aspects of articulation are examined. The most central faculty for sound expression is the *viśuddhi*, a synergic center located in the larynx. The primary roots of sounds are the consonants. In the Sanskrit language primacy is given to *ha* because it is born of the *anāhata* of the heart. It is a thrust of the vital force. Although it has an upward movement, it is more identified with *vyāna* than with *prāṇa*. The first manipulated consonant is *ka* which gets its formation in the throat very close to the larynx. Alphabet characters are classified as *ka varga*, *ca varga*, *ta varga*, *pa varga* and nine other auxiliary sounds. Of these, the *ka varga*, *ca varga*, *ta*

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varga and *pa varga* in the *viśuddhi* are recognized as sixteen fundamental reverberations for articulation.

All these consonants are to be conjoined with vowels or *svaras*. *Sva* means "one's own," *ra* means "that which pleases." There is a joyous element in the vowel without which music has no place. Just as light is considered to be constituted of seven colors of the spectrum, sound is also considered to be of seven notes. In Indian music they are *ṣadja (sā)*, *ṛṣabha, (ṝ)*, *gāndhāra (gā)*, *madhyama (mā)*, *pañcama (pā)*, *dhaivata (dha)*, and *niṣāda (nī)*. Corresponding to these there are the Western notes C, D, E, F, G, A, and B flat. These notes are looked upon as the mountain peaks of *śabda* and the *viśuddhi* rests on these peaks. The notes are composed of microtones *(śrutis)*. That which can be heard is *śruti*. In the musical context there is a singer and a listener, a performer and a connoisseur. In poetry also there is a writer and a reader.

What is remaining latent or potent is to be brought out with an internal effort *(abhyantara prayatna)*. Appropriate vowels are to be added to the consonants to bring out the sound. The *prayatna* or effort is less and more spontaneous if the vowel is appropriate. Such vowels are called *janita svara* or creative vowels. With the coupling of the *svara* to the consonant, the consonant gets a specific implication (*viśeṣaṇa*). With this the tones become harmonized and both the mood and emphasis of the singer becomes clear (*abhivyañjika*).

When a potter is modifying the shape of clay, the process is called *vikāra* or modulation. Similarly the alphabet characters are to be continuously reshuffled and appropriately rearranged; that process is called *akṣara vikāra*. In a musical performance sounds of letters, phrases, and sentences can come in a confection and therefore the musician has to reiterate by splitting sounds or words which get entwined. This act is *viśleṣaṇa* or analysis. Changing the mode of expression to give contrast is another musical device called *vikarṣaṇa*. Only a superior musician can create a dissonance of contrast to make the music artistically provocative. One of the main features in all music is the repetition of a phrase. It is called *abhyāsa*. Ultimately indications are to be shown of how a passage comes to a close. This is *virāma*. To give a meaningful expression, sounds are to be illuminated. When a consonant is illuminated with a *svara*, it becomes a *varṇa*. So in music there is both a melody as well as an arresting

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illumination. When it is a melody of a flowing kind it is called *rāga*, and when it becomes specifically illuminated as a gestalt it becomes a *varṇa*. Any manipulation of the sound is a *sthobha*. A particular handling is called *varṇa sthobha*, single sound illumination. The *sthobha* can be of a word; then it is *pāda sthobha*. It can be of a whole sentence as in a chorus, then it is a *vākya sthobha*. A contrapuntal effect can be created by deliberate conception of a sound or a word. Then we get *varṇa lopa*, and *akṣara lopa*. In the manipulation of vowels the musician has to exercise the channeling of the vital force with care and control. This is called *yama*. For that purpose three specific modes are given: *anudāta*, *svarita*, and *udāta*. *Ṛṣbha* and *dhaivata*, i.e., D and E in Western music, are considered to produce *anudāta*. *Ūadja*, *pañcama*, and *madhyama*, i.e., C, F, and G, make *svarita*. *Niṣāda* and *gāndhāra*, i.e., B-flat and A, are recommended for *udāta*.

The main classifications in musical expression are *rāga*, *thāla*, *mūrchana*, *alankāra* and *mela*. While words carry us into the world of relativistic bondage *(samsāra)*, music has a great efficiency to lift us to sublime heights where we can find our identity with the very origin of this world, *para*. The description for that is called *nādayoga*. Great musicians of India thought of music as a discipline for Self-realization or God-realization. Three of the famous compositions of Tyāgarājaswāmy, a South Indian classical musician, are constantly used by aspirants for *nādayoga*. One is a composition beginning with *nāda tanum anisam* in the *rāga citarañjani*. Another is *samaje varagamana* in the *rāga hindola*, and the third one is *svara rāga sudha* in the *rāga śankarābharaṇa*. Everything in life has a plus and minus aspect. In consciousness, modes of expression are chosen by the synergic center *ājña*, the central focus of consciousness. Its opposite is *lalana*, which resorts to everything negative that haunts the human mind. *Ājña* is located between the eyebrows and *lalana* is at the nape of the neck. Anxiety, anger, hatred, protest, fear and frustrations are given expression by the autonomous expression of the *lalana*.

Mantra 23

eṣa u vā udgīthaḥ; prāṇo vā ut, prāṇena hidam sarvamut-

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tabdham, vāgeva gītha, ucca gītha ceti sa udgīthaḥ.

Word Meanings

eṣaḥ - this; *u* - again; *vai* - indeed; *udgīthaḥ* - (is) the *udgītha*, a division of the *sāman*; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *vai* - indeed; *ut* - (is) *ut*; *prāṇena* - by the vital force; *hi* - for; *idam* - this (universe); *sarvam* - all; *uttabdham* - (is) upheld; *vāk* - speech; *eva* - itself; *gītha* - (is) *gītha*, a variety of sound; *ut ca* - (because it is) *ut*; *gītha* - *gītha*; *ca* - and; *iti* - therefore; *saḥ* - it; *udgīthaḥ* - (is) the *udgītha*

This vital force, again, is indeed the *udgītha* (a division of the *sāman*). The vital force is verily *ut* (support), for this universe is upheld by the vital force, and speech itself is *gītha* (a variety of sound). Because it is *ut* and *gītha*, therefore it is the *udgītha*.

We have already seen that there is great affinity between the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. In the present mantra our attention is drawn to the *praṇava* as the chosen mantra for *udgītha*. In the Western world a scheme of correlation came into vogue only after Rene Descartes' presentation of the Cartesian coordinates. In India such a scheme was known to the rishis at least from the time when *aumkāra* or *praṇava* was decided upon as a basic formula for making any probe into the causal factor of the phenomenal world and its ultimate transcendence. The Indian mind has been familiar with *AUM* for at least 3000 years. In a way, the mantra represents a person waking up into the world illuminated by the sun. The sun is a universal light shedding its rays on countless millions of perceptual bodies. On earth innumerable eyes open their lids and look at the panorama that is revealed to each sentient being. The reference here is not only to the eye of the human being, but of all beings who resonate to the solar light. When the eye is alerted, all other sense organs are also aroused. To give coordination to the responding sense organs, the mind keeps itself fully awake. Thus in the day time, which human beings extend into the night with powerful lights which they generate in their own homes, there

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are at least eighteen hours to engage in transactions. With the empirical perception with which human beings are blessed they engage in action every day within the frame of their specific time/space continuum.

In the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* empirical perception is considered to be the main feature of one's wakeful hours. One's organs of action also are well coordinated with one's organs of perception. All through the day the wakeful person goes from one eventful activity to another. Each leaves its impression in the memory storage. Whatever happens in the wakeful present vanishes from the present to be stacked as memory for the future. Although it is to be utilized for the future, when it recedes into the unconscious, its status becomes that of the past. The inner organ where the memory is epitomized like a seed becomes a conditional factor which is saved for the rest of one's life. An action done in the here and now of time and space with the distinctive triad of actor, action, and consequential affectivity is distilled from the action situation and the essence remains in the unconscious where it is processed to become a part of the subtle aspect of an individuated person. This is very similar to the culturing of milk by keeping it aside with a curdling culture. Every day an ascending and descending communication takes place between wakeful life and the deep unconscious of the individual. To make it clear and explicit, empirical perception calls to its aid previously stacked memories and utilizes them for cognition, interpretation, and affective reaction. The net result is then sent back to the unconscious for culturing where it will remain as a modified aspect of consciousness (*saṃskāra*).

For everything that the senses perceive there has to be a conceptual counterpart which alone can interpret whatever is presented in the field of the wakeful empirical perception. The conceptual field is purely subjective and it deals with mental images. Just as there is constant communication between the wakeful mind and the unconscious, there is also brisk communication between the subjective conceptual imaging and the deep unconscious where the essence of the past is arranged as layers and layers of memories. Processed memories are called *saṃskāras*. Doubly processed memories or conditionings which have assumed a causal status mainly control the subjective area of concepts which generates dreams, intuitive insight, poetic effusions and fantasies. The action field of empirical perception is mainly

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based on the qualities of nature's creative elements ranging from the sky to the earth; the conceptual world of imagination is mainly monitored by the triple qualities of procreative nature, *sattva*, *raja*, and *tamas*.

The ceaseless operations in the wakeful hours, dream hours, and the deep sleep state are carried out by the *prāṇa*. The *udgītha* of the *prāṇa* is mainly intended to raise the individual's consciousness from its biologic granary, so to say, to make a breakthrough and get into the world of pure spirit which is unnameable. The rishis just call it the fourth, *tūrīya*. Each time such a breakthrough is made, a lot of the accumulated dross which the ego has because of its identification with the agency of cognition, action and enjoyment is screened off. This kind of purificatory function is called *citta śuddhi*. For a full explanation of the *praṇava* we should make ourselves thorough with all the implications of the twelve mantras of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. This smallest of all *Upaniṣads* holds within it a scheme of correlation which can give us total familiarity with the four-fold phases of our consciousness which are schematically presented in the symbols of the *praṇava*: *A*, *U*, *M*, and silence in which *A* stands for the wakeful (empirical perception), *U* for the dreaming (subjective conceptual imaging), *M* holds within it the conditioned essence of the summation of life, and the silence that follows symbolizes the pure state of transcendence. In the study of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* this mantra plays a crucial role, so every effort should be made to understand it.

Mantra 24

taddhāpi brahmadattaścaikitāneyo rājānam bhakṣayannuvāca, ayam tasya rājā mūrdhānam vipātayatāt, yadito'yāsya āṅgiraso'nyenodagāyaditi; vācā ca hyeva sa prāṇena codagāyaditi.

Word Meanings

tat - on this subject; *ha api* - also (there is this story); *brahmadattaḥ* - Brahmadatta; *caikitāneyaḥ* - a great-grandson of Cikitāna; *rājānam* - the *soma* juice;

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bhakṣayan - drinking; *uvāca* - said; *ayam* - this; *rājā* - *soma* juice; *tasya* - his (my); *mūrdhānam* - head; *vipātayāt* - may knock off; *yat* - if; *ayāsyaḥ āṅgirasaḥ* - *ayāsya āṅgirasa*; *itaḥ* - than this; *anyena* through anyone else; *udgāyat* - chanted hymns *iti*; *saḥ* - it; *hi* - for; *vācā ca* - through speech; *prāṇena* - through the vital force; *ca* - and; *eva* - alone; *udgāyat* - chanted hymns; *iti* - thus

On this subject (there is) also (this story): Brahmadatta, a great-grandson of Cikitāna, while drinking the *soma* juice said, "Let this *soma* juice knock off my head if I say that *ayāsya āṅgirasa* sang hymns through any (deity) other than this (vital force combined with speech)." Indeed it sang hymns through speech and the vital force alone.

We live between the great possibility of realizing the supreme truth and the tragic possibility of drowning in the dark waters of ignorance. Our five senses and the mind are always on the lookout for the truth that sustains our reality. Unfortunately these devices for the verification of truth can be very deceptive. Before we go into a full-fledged inquiry of truth we are given a warning that the human mind is liable to error. From the day of one's embodiment in the womb of one's mother until one breathes one's last as an old person, physically and psychologically one undergoes several changes. In spite of the changing vicissitudes of psycho-somatic individuation passing through the stages of birth, growth, evolution, maturity, degeneration and final extinction, the indwelling spirit is always the immortal Self which does not undergo any quantitative or qualitative change. Individuated life is like a spark which makes an arc between the cathode of nature and the anode of the spirit, so to say. Spirit as such is called *cit*. Procreative nature is energy-filled. Though it has no energy of its own, in the presence of the spirit, which acts as a catalyst, inertial nature changes into procreative nature.

The homogeneous principle of life has in it the two inseparable phases of vertical existence and the horizontal transformations of nature into several animated modulations. When it manifests in an organism, one aspect remains as the perennial

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monitoring principle of life called the *cittiśakti* and the other provides for the intelligence to plan the world order. It is as if the cosmic space in which we live is only a projected counterpart of the field of the spirit, *cidākāśa*. Just as a spaceship has to change over from one orbit to another when it goes to the moon or another planet, when pure consciousness is directed from the spiritual space to enter into the phenomenality of the macrocosmic or microcosmic space, it changes into a conditioned consciousness called *cidābhāsa*. It is like we have split personalities. One part of us depends mainly on our psycho-somatic body/mind mechanism and takes for granted the data given to us by our organs of perception and all the conceptual accretions that go with the phenomenality of the perceptual world. The other half retains its integrity and meditates on the verity of the unchanging pure consciousness, or the spirit on which all the wrappings of nature are made.

In the sciences of physics, chemistry, biology, geology and astrophysics, scientists are continuously showing us how one eternally unitive principle transforms into many aspects of physical energy, such as heat, light, hydraulics, and thermodynamics, and how the variations of energy cause many chemical formations. Outwardly, physical, chemical, biological and astrophysical realities can look variant and variegated but the inner reality is the same.

In the present case *prāṇa* is recognized as the sustaining principle of life and its amorphous externality is attributed to the overgrowth of conceptual ideas clothed in speech. What is said here of speech is also true of formal variations. The reference to the drinking of *soma* juice is very significant. The chemistry of *soma* is the same as alcohol. When the physiology of our body is contaminated, the inner clarity of the spirit also gets confounded. When one is under the spell of any such drug effect it is only natural that one becomes exposed to hallucinations and tends to behave in a funny manner. Although the reference to *soma* juice looks ludicrous it serves the purpose of bringing home the truth that embodied beings are vulnerable to psychogenic illusions. This makes it necessary to be always watchful not to miss the basic and fundamental truth which can get lost in the ever-proliferating variegations that distract us. Losing track of truth not only exposes us to ignorance, but also pushes us unaware into the tragic dead-ends of life. Thus this mantra is to be taken

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as a caution to watch our step as we progress in the path of our inquiry. Fortunately all the *Upaniṣads* are interlaced. Therefore even if the guiding light of one *Upaniṣad* is not clear we can site several references from other *Upaniṣads* to keep us always on the right track.

Mantra 25

tasya haitasya sāmno yaḥ svam veda bhavati hāsya svam; tasya vai svara eva svam, tasmādārtvijyam kariṣyanvāci svaramiccheta, tayā vācā svarasampannayārtvijyam kuryāt; tasmādyajñe svaravantam didṛkṣanta eva. atho yasya svam bhavati; bhavati hāsya svam ya evametatsāmnaḥ svam veda.

Word Meanings

yaḥ - who; *tasya* - that, above mentioned; *ha etasya sāmnaḥ* - of this *sāman*; *svam* - wealth; *veda* - knows; *asya* - for one; *svam* - wealth; *bhavati ha* - there is; *tasya vai* - its; *svaraḥ* - sweet tone; *eva* - verily; *svam* - (is) wealth; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ārtvijyam* - the duty of a priest; *kariṣyan* - intending to do; *vāci* - in voice; *svaram* - a sweet tone; *iccheta* - (one) should wish; *tathā* - that; *svarasampannayā* - enriched with a sweet tone; *vācā* - by voice; *ārtvijyam* - the priestly function; *kuryāt* - (one) should perform; *tasmāt* - therefore; *yajñe* - in a sacrifice; *svaravantam* - (a priest) having a sweet tone; *didṛkṣante* - (people) desire to see; *eva* - verily; *atha u* - as also; *yasya* - (one) in whose possession; *svam* - wealth; *bhavati* - there is; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *sāmnaḥ* - of the *sāman*; *etat* - this; *svam* - wealth; *veda* - knows; *asya* - for one; *svam* - wealth; *bhavati* - there is; *ha* - indeed

One who knows the wealth of this *sāman* (vital force) indeed obtains wealth. Sweet tone is verily its wealth. Therefore one who will do the duty of a priest should desire to have a sweet tone in one's voice. One should per-

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form priestly function through that voice enriched with a sweet tone. Therefore, in a sacrifice, people do look for a priest having a sweet tone, as also one who has wealth. One who thus knows this wealth of the *sāman* indeed attains wealth.

We are born as unsatisfied creatures. The opening verse of the second *brāhmaṇa* says that in the beginning there was nothing and nothing was the same as death and hunger. It is this negativity in life which gives living beings the aspiration to look for positive factors to relate with. When nothing is replaced with being, there comes satisfaction. Food brings satisfaction to the hungry, drink brings satisfaction to the thirsty, love brings companionship to the lonely, knowledge brings the wonder of light to the ignorant. Thus three prime factors come into one's life. One is awareness; the second is relating oneself to what one is aware of; the third is the realization of a value which makes one's knowledge and relationship meaningful or valuable.

We look upon value as wealth *(dhana)*. When a person is in possession of wealth, one is overjoyed. The state of the joyous is called *dhanyata*. The three stages of life are: being born in inadequacy, aspiring for adequacy and becoming happily satisfied by acquiring that which gives adequacy. Adequacy and satisfaction are conditional. Time, space and other factors steal adequacy. Consequently, one has to replenish one's riches continuously. There are riches which are perishable. The perishable riches are the products which one accumulates with physical effort and through relativistic manipulations. Of these perishable riches there are physical riches and mental riches. Physical riches are the quantitative mass of things belonging to the gross world such as property, food, houses and clothes. In the Bible we hear Jesus Christ warning people against riches that can be stolen by thieves or eaten by worms. Then there are other riches which people try to secure by becoming influential in holding power over other people. This is mainly done by projecting images in the minds of others.

Indian mythology gives the symbols of various kinds of riches which the *devas* or the shining ones in us aspire for. It is said in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* that the gods and demons churned the ocean of milk using mount Mandara as a churning rod and

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Vāsuki, the cosmic snake, as a churning rope around the mountain. When the churning was going on, the symbol of value to appear first was the embodiment of wish-fulfillment in the form of a cow *(kāmadhenu)*. The *kāmadhenu* stands for the unsatiated desire in every person. The second value to appear was the form of an erotic female with seductive looks called Vāruṇi Devi, who brought with her an addictive drink. This shows that one of the first pleasures embodied beings look for is the superficial pleasure of their palates and erotic love. The third symbol to come was *pārijātaḥ*, a wish-fulfilling tree with a flower of exquisite scent. The fourth were heavenly damsels *(apsaras)*, similar to the *hourls* of the Islamic heavens. The fifth was the moon which is a symbol of the human mind. The lunar image is the frenzy of mystical transcendence. As if to compensate for all these pleasures the sixth symbol to come was venom which the snakes received. Then came Dhanvantari with a pitcher of the elixir of immortality *(amṛta)*. It was followed with the appearance of the goddess of Grace, Lakṣmi. She was presented as seated in a lotus flower. Lakṣmi is also the symbol of extravagance. Other values which came from the ocean were a white horse, Uccaiśśravas and a white elephant, Airāvata. These symbols of value all belong to the relativistic plane of the fanciful mind of a desirous person.

This mantra focuses on the highest value which comes from the discipline of directing the breath to chant the melody of one's supreme knowledge. The melody that one puts into the notes or pronunciations is called *svara*. *Svam* means "one's own." *Ram* is *ranjanam* which means, "raising oneself to the delight of one's own Self." There are three grades of values: the first belongs to the mundane world, the second to the hypostatic world of imagination, and the third transcends the first and second worlds of values and remains identified with the eternal Self. Mundane values are called *preyas*. They are perishable. Hypostatic imaginative values are called *śreyas*. They are also perishable. The supreme kind of imperishable value is *niśreyas*. The mark of *niśreyas* is total freedom from all bondage, physical or mental.

Mantra 26

tasya haitasya sāmno yaḥ suvarṇam veda. bhavati

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hāsya suvarṇam; tasya vai svara eva suvarṇam; bhavati hāsya suvarṇam ya evametatsamnaḥ suvarṇam veda.

Word Meanings

tasya - that above mentioned; *ha etasya sāmnaḥ* - of this *sāman*; *yaḥ* - who; *suvarnam* - gold; *veda* - knows; *asya* - for him; *suvarṇam* - gold; *bhavati* - there is; *ha* - verily; *tasya* - its; *vai* - indeed; *svaraḥ* - good tone, here, correct articulation; *eva* - indeed; *suvarṇam* - (is) gold; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *sāmnaḥ* - of the *sāman; etat* - this; *suvarṇam* - *veda* - knows; *asya* - for one; *suvarṇam* - gold; *bhavti* - there is; *ha* - indeed

One who knows what is the gold of this *sāman* verily attains gold; correct articulation is indeed its gold. One who knows this gold of the *sāman* verily attains gold.

The *Upaniṣad* commences with the idea of sacrifice. The object dedicated for sacrifice is a horse. We have seen that it was not an ordinary horse, but a cosmic horse. The head of the horse symbolizes the dawn, and the behind of the horse represents the dusk. The four sides of the horse represent space. Thus the structured world of the cosmos with multitudinous functions in space and time is intended for sacrifice. It begins with the external world. As it proceeds, the usual sacrificial ritual seems to be omitted. Instead a creation theory ensues from the original idea of sacrifice and passes through the models of the *prajāpati, prāṇaspati, bṛhaspati,* and *brahmaṇaspati.* The massive world existing in the time-space continuum is reduced to the significance of words that can be uttered or articulated.

The four-fold consciousness in which the world reflects is produced for the purpose of chanting *akāra, ukāra, makāra* and silence. Although *udāta* suggests an ascending leap, it is balanced and normalized by *anudāta* which comes from silence. Thus the objectivity of the world is given up in preference to the subjectivity of the search. *Svarita,* rejoicing in one's own Self, is made the most central theme of the sacrifice. If we look at the articulation of *AUM* in the *udgītha* we can see the scheme of cor-

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relation implied in it. In *akāra* which is meant for the *udāta* the chanter and the chanting are distinctly different. With effort, the upgoing *prāṇa* is brought to bear upon the manipulation of *aumkāra* in the *viśuddhi* and the first *svara*, *A*, is conjoined to it. This is done with the open mouth. Soon after, the mouth is closed halfway. Objectivity is left outside and the chanter immerses into himself or herself in a subjective pondering.

This is like entering from outer space into the biosphere. The order that is usually maintained is of the *ākāśa*, *antarikṣa* and the *bhūmī*. *Ākāśa* is described as that which grants a field of operation (*avakāśa dātur ākāśa*). *Dātur* is giving. Although *antarikṣa* is conveniently translated as atmosphere, it is the inner world where one sees one's own subjective Self. This also agrees with the etymology of the word "atmosphere" because *ātman* in German is the same as breathing. In India *prāṇa* and the Self are equated, so it is the sphere of the inner Self. *Bhūmī* is more correctly *bhūmika* which means "the ultimate base." When a word is spoken, only the sound is heard but the sound is just a device to produce the conceptual meaning interjected into the word. Even when a word refers to an external object, when it is heard, the meaning of the word transforms one's inner consciousness to assume the qualitative significance of that word. It is a purely subjective experience and thus the *udgītha* or the chanting of *AUM* passes from the objective to the subjective and from the subjective to the causal. Ultimately, it transcends the causal also to become identified with the inexpressible truth and beauty of the Self. This is the silence which follows *AUM*. This converts the *udgītha* into a *japa*. *Japa* means silent pondering and therefore in the *Bhagavad Gīta*, *japayajña* is considered to be the most superior kind of sacrifice. It is symbolized by a lamp which burns in a room where there is no wind. That means the flames do not flicker. The streak of oil that is flowing into the flame is constant, continuous and contiguous.

Like the *svarita* which equates the *udāta* and the *anudāta*, there is a normalization of elements in the unflickering glow of a lamp's flame. That is meant to be the ideal state of a yogi's consciousness where it is not swaying this way or that way. When there is *eka rasa*, only one single mood, one single joy, one unitive understanding that shines, it is as if the mind has become mindless or thoughtless, a state described by the yogis as *niścintam* or *amanaskam*. This state is described differently in

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different religious disciplines. Christians call it contemplative beatitude, yogis call it *samādhi*, and in Zen it is called *satori*. On attaining it, one becomes firmly established and the ground on which one stands firm is called *dṛdha bhūmī*. Thus from the multitudinous vastness of space we come to the inner world of the unflickering vision and ultimately to a changeless footing in the *dṛdha bhūmī*. In a sacrifice when everything is burnt away, all forms and all names are reduced to ashes. What remains is only a fragrance in the atmosphere and an abiding peace that fills the bosom of the sacrificer. Such is the grand scheme revealed in this mantra.

Mantra 27

tasya haitasya sāmno yaḥ pratiṣṭhām veda prati ha tiṣṭhati; tasya vai vāgeva pratiṣṭhā. vāci hi khalveṣa etatprāṇaḥpratiṣṭhito gīyate; anna ityu haika āhuḥ.

Word Meanings

tasya - that; *ha etasya sāmnaḥ* - of this *sāman; yaḥ* - who; *pratiṣṭhām* - the support; *veda* - knows; *pratitiṣṭhati* - obtains a support; *ha* - verily; *vāk* - speech, here the root of the tongue, etc.; *eva* - alone; *tasya vai* - its; *pratiṣṭha* - (is) support; *vāci* - on speech; *hi* - for; *khalu* alone; *pratiṣṭhitaḥ* - resting; *eṣaḥ* - this; *prāṇaḥ* - vital force; *etat* - thus; *gīyate* - is transformed into a chant; *eke* - some; *anne* - (resting) on food; *iti ha u* - also; *āhuḥ* - maintain

He who knows the support of this *sāman* verily obtains a support. Speech indeed is its support; for resting on speech alone is the vital force thus transformed into a chant. Some maintain, resting on food (it became a chant).

Mantra 28

athātaḥ pavamānānāmevābhyārohaḥ; sa vai khalu pras-

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totā sāma prastauti, sa yatra prastuyāttadetāni japet. asato mā sadgamaya, tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, mṛtyormāmṛtam gamayeti; sa yadāhāsato mā sadgamayeti, mṛtyurvā asat, sadamṛtam, mṛtyormāmṛtam gamaya, amṛtam mā kurvityevaitadāh; tamaso mā jyotirgamayeti, mṛtyurvai tamaḥ, jyotiramṛtam, mṛtyormāmṛtam gamaya, amṛtam mā kurvityevaitadāh; mṛtyormāmṛtam gamayeti, nātra tirohitamivāsti. atha yānitarāṇi stotrāṇi teṣvātmane'nnādyamāgāyet. tasmādu teṣu varam vṛṇīta yam kāmam kāmayeta tam; sa eṣa evamvidudgātātmane vā yajamānāya vā yam kāmam kāmayate tamāgāyati; taddhaitallokajideva; na haivālokyatāyā āśāsti ya evametatsāma veda.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *ataḥ* - therefore; *pavamānānām* - of the hymns called *pavamāna*; *eva* - only; *abhyārohaḥ* - the elevating utterance; *saḥ* - that; *prastotā* - priest called *prastotṛ*; *vai khalu* - verily; *sāma* - the *sāman*; *prastauti* - chants; *saḥ* - he; *yatra* - when; *prastuyāt* - may chant (it); *tat* - then; *etāni* - these (mantras); *japet* - (the sacrificer) should mutter; *asataḥ* - from untruth; *mā* - me; *sat* - to truth; *gamaya* - lead; *tamasaḥ* - from darkness; *mā* - me; *jyotiḥ* - to light; *gamaya* - lead; *mṛtyoḥ* - from death; *mā* - me; *amṛtam* - to immortality; *gamaya* - lead *iti*; *saḥ* - it (the mantra); *yat* - that; *āha* - says; *asataḥ mā sat gamaya* - (as above) *iti*; *mṛtyuḥ* - death (is); *vai* - verily; *asat* - untruth; *sat* - truth(is); *amṛtam* - immortality; *mṛtyoḥ mā amṛtam gamaya* - (as above); *amṛtam* - immortality; *mā* - me; *kuru* - make; *iti etat* - this; *eva* - only; *āha* - (it) says; *tamasaḥ mā jyotiḥ gamaya* - (as above) *iti*; *tamaḥ* - darkness; *vai* - verily; *mṛtyuḥ* - (is) death; *jyotiḥ* - light; *amṛtam* - (is) immortality; *mṛtyoh mā amṛtam gamaya* - (as above); *amṛtam* - immortal; *mā* - me; *kuru* - make *iti*; *etat* - this; *eva* - only; *aha* - (it) says; *mṛtyoḥ mā amṛtam gamaya iti*, *atra* - here (the meaning is); *tirohitam* - hidden; *iva* - as (in the other cases); *na* - not; *asti* - is; *atha* - then; *yāni* - (as to) those; *itarāni* - other; *stotrāṇi* - hymns; *tesu* - through them; *atmane* - for himself; *anna adyam* -

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eatable food; *āgāyet* - should obtain by singing; (because) *saḥ* - that; *eṣaḥ* - this; *evamvit* - knowing thus; *udgāta* - chanter; *ātmane vā* - either for himself; *yajmānāya vā* - or for the sacrificer; *yam* - whichever; *kāmam* - desire; *kāmayate* - desires; *tam* - that; *āgāyati* - obtains by singing; *tasmāt u* - therefore; *tesu* - while those hymns (are being sung); *yam* which; *kāmam* - covetable object; *kāmayeta* - he may desire; *tam* - that; *varam* - boon; *vṛṇīta* - (the sacrificer) should as for; *tat ha etat* - this very (meditation); *lokajit* - (is) the winner of the world (of *hiraṇyagarbha*); *eva* - certainly; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *etat* - this; *sāma* - *sāman* (vital force); *veda* - knows; *alokyatāyāḥ* - on account of unfitness for the world; *āśā* - (any occasion for) prayer; *na ha eva* - certainly not; *asti* - there is

Now therefore the elevating utterance of only the *pavamāna* hymns (is being enjoined). Verily it is the priest called *prastotṛ* who chants the *sāman*. When he chants it, (the sacrificer) should mutter these three (*yajus mantras*): "Lead me from untruth to truth; lead me from darkness to light; lead me from death to immortality." When the mantra says, "Lead me from untruth to truth," verily "untruth" is death, and "truth" is immortality. So it only says, "Lead me from death to immortality," that is, "Make me immortal." In the mantra, "Lead me from darkness to light," verily, "darkness" is death, and "light" is immortality. So it only says, "Lead me from death to immortality," that is, "make me immortal." In the mantra, "Lead me from death to immortality," the meaning is not hidden as in the other cases. Then as to the other (nine) hymns the chanter should obtain eatable food for himself by singing them. When these are sung, the sacrificer should ask for any boon that he wants, the reason being that whatever object the chanter endowed with such knowledge desires for himself or for the sacrificer, he attains by singing. This very meditation on the vital force enables one to win the world (of *hiraṇyagarbha*). One who meditates thus upon this *sāman* (vital force) has never to pray on account of being unfit for the world (of *hiraṇyagarbha*).

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To understand the intention of this section (*brāhmaṇa*), we have to recapitulate everything given thus far in this *adhyāya* from the manifestation of this world and the manifestation of separate living entities, especially the human being. We have come hierarchically through many lives to the present one. For a person of little understanding the factual world which one sees and experiences here is what one perceives with one's senses and understands with one's mind. In that phenomenal world which is seemingly real to him or her, there is a triangular occurrence. The world is illuminated with fire and with luminous bodies like the sun, moon and stars. We may group all sources of illuminating light as the revealer of the physical world. The illuminating light existed in the world before we were born. The agent of illumination will continue after our death. This is the number one entity in the world of empirical experience. The second entity is the independent existence of the physical world which is revealed to us by the illuminating entity. That world was there before our manifestation and that world will continue even when we disappear from the scene. The third is this corporeal being with which we identify our individuation. We are affected both by the illuminating agent and the world that is revealed to us. We have two kinds of dependence. To know the world we depend on the light that illuminates it. To sustain ourselves we participate in the benevolence of the world that is revealed to us. Thus we are in a triangular situation.

Although the revealing light, the revealed world, and the cognating individual within are the same for one person as for another, one person seems to be more happy than another, and one person is sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy. So naturally we have two major questions: 1. What causes unhappiness and happiness? 2. How can we avoid unhappiness and always remain in happiness?

Our bodies are physical, or rather psycho-physical. This world is also physical. Physically, chemically, biologically, we seem to be part and parcel of this world. When the life in us is strictly in unison with the laws of this world, such as physical laws, chemical laws, biological laws, and psychological laws, we live a normal life. All these laws have their norms. When the norm is not maintained, subnormality or abnormality sets in. Subnormality is a deficiency; abnormality is an excess. These two evils can happen to us through the action orientation with

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which we relate to the world. Our main actions are respiration, partaking of food for nourishment, engaging in sexual activity for propagation, and manipulating nature or the external world for our creature comforts. In that world of action we have encounters with other members of our species and with other species. Because of competition or rivalry in the field of action, we can get hurt or killed. To avoid such contingencies we erect various kinds of defenses and sometimes even give offense to others. Thus on the whole, one main source of the destruction of our happiness is physical and biological functions. The second source of misery comes from our lack of understanding because of erroneous perceptions, faulty inferences, wrong judgements, and a number of such psychological factors. On the whole we can say that the second source of misery is our mind or psyche. The third source of misery is the vastly complicated world order governed by an unknown power of which we are only a very negligible part. This unknown but holistic source of both life and the lifeless world is commonly called the Divine.

In another way we can say that we have within us a factual verity of existence, an inner awareness of the existence of the world and of our personal self and a continuous value appreciation of the individuated person's interaction with the universal fact to which the individual belongs. The two main modes of value appreciation are pleasure and pain, or happiness and misery. Therefore there is a continuous process in every individual of looking for the pleasurable in the world of existence, world of knowledge, and the affective world of appreciation. Consequently there is also an avoidance of certain things that exist, a rejection of knowledge which is considered misguiding and avoidance of certain questionable pleasures. All are not in total appreciation of the world in which they live. The world is not structured the same way for everyone. Individually we pick and choose a world that is very suitable to us and we individually structure it according to our choice. But there are common factors in the constituent bases for selective structuring, selective social functioning and selective value appreciation. These common factors are called facts of existence *(sat)*, source of illumination *(jyotis)* and continuity through existential awareness *(amṛtam)*.

First we were taught how a physico-chemical and biologic structure of the organism is achieved through biophysical manifestations. This has reference to ritualistic action. Then we are

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taught how, through the development of a means of communication, such as language, a global relationship can be established between an individual and similar members of the entire human species. The world of facts becomes replaced by a world of ideas which can maintain perennial values, and in this last portion of the third *brāhmaṇa* we are shown how we can mastermind the achievement of our ultimate goal of life. This is done through the adoption of a discipline of contiguity in the perpetuation of our value appreciation which is termed here as *japa*.

Three short words are given to us in this concluding mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa*, *sat*, *jyotis*, and *amṛtam*. Only when the full implication of these three terms is established in our conceptual understanding, do they get their true operational meaning to guide us to the ultimate goal of our search. In almost all *Upaniṣads* the rishis take pain to bring us as close as possible to the verity and certitude of these three terms. True understanding refers to definitive meaning. Misunderstanding can lead us to the blind alleys of many indefinite presumptions, imaginations, fantasies and surmises. While right understanding leads us to the clarity of distinctive light, a wrong notion can take us astray into darkness. If we enter into darkness we soon lose interest. That is why we spoke of the wrong notion as a dead end. Confusion is confounding.

The rishis presented the case of each term in an archaic style. Take for instance the sixth mantra of the first chapter of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* which says:

> "I am a season. I am connected with the seasons. From space as a womb I am produced as the semen for a wife, as the brilliance of the year, as the soul of every single being. You are the soul of every single being. What you are, this am I."
> To him he says, "Who am I?"
> He should say, "The Real."
> "What is that, namely the Real *(satyam)?*"
> "Whatever is other than the sense organs *(deva)* and the vital breaths *(prāṇa)* - that is the actual *(sat)*. But as for the sense organs and the vital breaths - that is the yon *(tyam)*. This is expressed by this word '*satyam*' (the Real). It is as extensive as this world-all. You are this world-all." 3

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To modern minds this kind of presentation may look confusing. We are disciplined differently in the present age where explicit descriptions are preferred to poetic intuitions. In this presentation of the word *sat*, *sat* is presented as brilliance which brings substantiating life for a being. Thus it implies both *jyotis* and *amṛtam* in the existentiality of the real. A subtle distinction is made between the term *sat* and *satyam*. The word *satyam* is broken into two, *sat* and *tyam*. Only with the exercise of an intuitive penetration can the distinction between *sat* and *tyam* can be comprehended. Let us take an example. A young woman is presented to a group of people. To her they are all strangers and from their physical forms all that she can make out is that they are members of the human species. Then she is presented to the gathering as a prospective bride and is especially introduced to a young man. It is made known to her that that particular man came with a proposal for her hand. If it is a group of twenty people, all the other nineteen people except this one man fade out as people of no consequence. To her they are mere shadows. The man who came with a proposal of marrying suddenly becomes very real to her. He becomes irresistible. The truth of him enters into her whole being and all other people are "yonder" to her, *tyam*. The entire company is a combination of *sat* and *tyam*. The other people cannot be denied because they have their physical forms and their names and they are visible to her organs of perception. Yet it is only one person who gladdens her heart. He has become a light for her *(jyotis)* and he is going to give meaning to her life today, tomorrow, and for all time to come. Thus the fact of being embodied becomes less real. It stands outside her self and self-interest. On the other hand, the bridegroom is real not because he has a body, but because he is going to be bracketed with her self.

If after a few years of marriage he proves to be unworthy of being loved, inefficient to act as her husband, not faithful to her, cruel and estranged, then his body is still there, but his husbandhood becomes yonder. Thus the truth of a person, the reality of his or her being, comes from a functional dynamics that alone can light the lamp of endearment by which the continuity of life is enriched with the meaning of relationship.

This *Upaniṣad* introduces to us a meaning which is readily available to us if we merely listen to the statements, although it is put in a very subtle way. The real is given a personality and

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speaks of itself as a season. It is not just a season; it is the most productive of the seasons of a year. What the season produces is the promise of a being that can be nurtured in the womb of an aspiring wife. The fertilization of the egg is a momentous event that fills the entire egg with growth, development, and diverse activities, all incorporated into a possible eternal meaning. The brilliant is not just a self-shining entity. It can bring a truth to be incorporated within, which can be an ever-shining endearment that sustains one's soul. Just as the duplicated, replicated, and organized cells are the corporeality of our individuation, the registry of every brilliant exposition of the world becomes an integral part of our being.

For instance, in the sunlight we see a tree revealed to us. We are pleased to see its beauty, the abundance of its growth and bunches of flowers. We even notice that where some flowers have withered, fruits are appearing. Thus it is not just a mere perception. It is going to be part of our life. We become tree-loving people. In the morning light we see a bird alighting on the branches of the tree. The bird disappears behind the foliage, but we hear a melodious song coming from the bird's hideout. The bird looked unimpressive with its small body wrapped in grey feathers, but its shrill musical voice is fascinating. The melody of the bird gives a fresh dimension to the tree. We turn away from the tree and walk towards home. Our home stands bathed in a cheerful sunlight. The tree and the bird are no more with us, but it is as if we have come with our hearts still singing joyously of the tree which has received a bird for its soul.

When we sit in our home, the home is so close to our souls. In fact it is the very comfort of our innermost being. We sit in the home, and the home is in our hearts. Thus whatever could have been yonder *(tyam)* has now become absolutely existential *(sat)*. We open the window and see in the distance the panorama of a lake with hills on the indistinct horizon. Lush green trees are a little closer. It is not just sky, water, and trees; it is a loveable panorama, something which an artist would love to paint and immortalize. Thus many things which were yonder are put together and all these finite things are inseparable from the infinitude of our consciousness. The sun is gone, but we see a frail crescent moon shining amidst shimmering stars. The scientist may say that the moon has no light of its own - what does it matter? The crescent moon is like a growing bud. It is like your

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own little baby innocently sleeping with its eyes closed. Beyond the moon you see a brilliant star. With your understanding of astronomy you correct yourself and say it is Jupiter. Ancient fairy tales open up in the world of your memories and you come to hear the beautiful stories which your grandmother told you about Jupiter being a god in the sky. Thus fact and fiction lose their edges and a confection of a poetic effusion takes possession of your soul. This is how the rishi presents to you the science of your world being structured through perception which gives depth to your knowledge. For other references please read: *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* - 3.19.1; 6.2.1; 6.2.2; 6.8.1; 6.8.4; 6.9.2; 10.1.2; 6.3.2; 8.3.5; and 8.5.2. As you look for the definitive meaning of *sat*, you come to *tat tvam asi*, the dictum of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which is honored today as the most fundamental teaching of the *Upaniṣads*.

An equally fascinating study in the *Upaniṣad* is its concept of brilliance *(jyoti)*. When we hear the word "brilliance" what first comes to mind is the physical appearance of a flame, or the light of the sun or moon. This can be confusing. The sun gives light to aid our eyes, but the sun has no sensation of light. It does not see that it is a glowing fire of supreme brilliance. To itself it is darker than the darkest night. We can turn on lights in our homes and see many things, read or write poetry. In that light we can produce epics of great charm, and yet the overlooking light is absolutely blind. It does not see what is passing through our hearts and what is coming from the tips of our pens.

The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* presents to us the idea of brilliance *(jyoti)*. In 1.1.5 the *Upaniṣad* says that there are two kinds of knowledge (brilliance). One is the knowledge of religious traditions and the other is the knowledge of the eternal. It further says, "The faint light of the tradition of religion," characterizing it as lower knowledge. We read, "The lower is the *Ṛg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Atharva Veda*, the science of pronunciation *(śikṣa)*, ritual *(kalpa)*, grammar *(vyākaraṇa)*, definition *(nirukta)*, metrics *(chandas)*, and astrology *(jyotiṣa)*. Now the higher knowledge is that by which the imperishable *(akṣara)* is apprehended." In the same *Upaniṣad* we read in 3.1.5:

> This soul *(ātman)*, is obtainable by truth, by austerity *(tapas)*, by proper knowledge *(jñāna)*, by the student's life of chastity *(brahmacarya)*, constantly practiced.

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Within the body, consisting of light, pure is He
Whom the ascetics (*yati*),
with imperfections done away, behold. [4]

There are more references to *jyoti* in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* 5.3; in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 3.13.7, 3.17.7, 3.18.3, 4.1.2, 4.7.3, and 8.3.4; in the *Maitri Upaniṣad* 6.27, 6.35; in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.3.1, 2.3.3; in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 2.1.2; in the *Praśna Upaniṣad*, 1.5; and the *Maitri Upaniṣad*, 6.14.

In Vedānta there are many triads which all have almost identical meanings. However, the subtle differences between these terms are significant to an aspirant who is disciplining himself or herself, holding firmly to the philosophical and mystical implications. *Satyam, jñānam*, and *anantam*, (truth, knowledge, and infinity) make one triad. Another is *sat, cit, ānandam*, (truth, consciousness, and supreme or ultimate value). A third is *sat, jyotis*, and *amṛtam*, (truth, brilliance, and immortality). There is yet another triad which says, *satyam, śivam, sundaram*, (truth, beatitude, and beauty). Most of these terms come in everyday speech and have empirical connotations. The philosophical connotation is at variance with the meaning we conventionally assign to these terms. For an aspirant (*sādhaka*), it is absolutely necessary to hold in one's mind the philosophically valid meaning instead of the conventional popular meaning. In our transactions what we call truth is nothing more than empirical appearance. The popular saying, "call a spade a spade" is advising us to believe in what we see. Philosophically that attitude is not valid. This subject is elaborated in the well-known book of Buddhist dialectics *Milinda Panna* (the questions of King Milinda to Nāgasena).

When a physicist says that the entire world is matter, his reference is not to what he sees or hears, but to his philosophical conjecture that, irrespective of the appearance of things, everything is fundamentally a formation of matter. What is true in physics is also true in philosophy. In one way we can say what is true for the empiricist is false for the Vedāntin, and for that matter to any idealist. For a transactionalist or an instrumentalist, knowledge is a descriptive statement of appearance but to a critical philosopher, knowledge is the cause and effect relationship between reality and its appearance. What the transactionalist says is one sided; it does not go beyond the veil of appearance.

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A greater confusion has come regarding the concept of *amṛtam* or *ānandam*. In India there is a legend which describes *amṛtam* as a certain drink that was obtained from the milk ocean which could transform mortals into immortals. This story is taken at face value and many people think that *amṛtam* is a sort of sweet elixir. Similarly, uncritical people do not make any distinctions between pleasures and fundamental values. They think of *sukha* and *ānanda* as the same. These kinds of verbal errors are to be corrected before we fully acquaint ourselves with the three terms which pertain to our discussion, *sat, jyotis*, and *amṛtam*. These three terms occur in many forms in almost all *Upaniṣads*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 1.4.4 we read:

> Verily when one finishes a *ṛg* he sounds out *AUM;* similarly a *sāman*, similarly a *yajus*. This sound is the *svara*. It is *amṛtam* and *abhayam*. By taking refuge in it the gods became immortal and fearless.

Here the *amṛtam* is directly related to the mystic syllable *AUM*. The first three aspects of the *praṇava*, (*akāra*, *ukāra*, and *makāra*) refer respectively to the gross world of the wakeful, the subtle world of the dream and the causal world of the deep unconscious. It is this triad that manifests as the world of embodied beings. This is not immortality. When a person sleeps and goes into dream, the conventional empirical world where he or she was engaging in transactions in the wakeful vanishes. Therefore it is destructible. It is *mṛtam* and it is wrought with many kinds of fearful situations. Although it looks stable in our wakeful experience, weariness of the body or drowsiness of the mind can easily destabilize it. What we experience in the dream is even more transient than the wakeful. What hides in the *suṣupti* or deep sleep cannot be traced. When you chant *AUM* the *svara* goes from the finite into the infinite. The infinite is the *turīya* which is formless. You need a gush of wind to pronounce *A, U,* and *M*. The silence that follows is not an elaboration of *prāṇa*, it is *aprāṇa*. Therefore the immortal aspect of *praṇava* is the inaudible, effortless and final merger into the undisturbed *para*. It is in this sense that *amṛtam* comes and not, as people glibly say, through an excess of pleasure which they call bliss. In Upaniṣadic literature no word has done more harm than bliss. Most people think that getting into *samādhi* is like taking a sweet bev-

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erage. In the same section of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, mantra I.4.5. we read: "He who pronounces the syllable, knowing it thus, takes refuge in that *svara*, which is the *amṛta* and *abhaya*." In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* we find extremely lyrical presentations of the concept of *amṛtattva*. We read in 3.1.1 as follows:

> Verily, yonder sun is the honey of the gods. The cross-beam for it is the sky. The honeycomb is the atmosphere. The brood are the particles of light.
>
> The eastern rays of that sun are its eastern honey-cells. The bees are the *ṛg* verses. The flower is the *Ṛg Veda*. The drops of nectar fluid (arose as follows). Verily these *Ṛg* verses brooded upon that *Ṛg Veda;* from it, when it had been brooded upon, there was produced as its essence splendor, brightness, power, vigor and food.
>
> It flowed forth. It repaired to the sun. Verily, that is what that red appearance of the sun is. 5

The entire third *brāhmaṇa* is dedicated to describing the honey aspect of the cosmic world of values. Unless we become very thorough with this extensive elaboration of *amṛtam* in the third chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, our understanding of the present mantra will be meager.

An equally striking section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*, or honey section, which comes in the second chapter, fifth *brāhmaṇa*. In that study, earth, water, fire, air, sun, directions, moon, thunder, space, *dharma*, truth, humanity, and the Self are all considered honey to the world, and the world is considered reciprocally as honey to all these cosmic entities. Holding on to a golden thread of values, one has to convey oneself from the perishing world to the imperishable. Fear comes from the fear of perishing. Unless one enters into the imperishable *amṛta*, fear will never leave a person totally.

Going into the world of the fearless immortal is described in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 2.2.10:

> The sun shines not there, nor the moon and stars;
> These lightnings shine not, much less this (earthly) fire!
> After Him, as He shines, doth everything shine.

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This whole world is illumined with His light. [6]

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* I.4.1, we read,

> He who is pre-eminent among the Vedic hymns (*chandas*), who is the all-formed (*viśva rūpa*),
> Who has sprung into being from immortality above the Vedic hymns -
> Let this Indra deliver me with intelligence! O God (*deva*),
> I would become possessor of immortality!
> May my body be very vigorous!
> May my tongue be exceeding sweet!
> May I hear abundantly with my ears!
> Thou art the sheath of Brahma,
> With intelligence covered o'er!
> Guard for me what I have heard. [7]

Thus the continuous contemplation recommended in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is an assignment that will take a sincere aspirant (*sādhaka*), to a discipline and self-study that is sure to become all-absorbing. Only with a sound insight into the essence of the major *Upaniṣads* can one accomplish this task to the satisfaction of one's best conscience. Indeed, this path suggested by the *Upaniṣads* has nothing to rival it. With full determination one should enter into the path of *brahman*. Then alone can one think of oneself as a *brahmacārī*. The four requirements suggested in this mantra are to hold onto truth, to have comprehensive knowledge, to have continuous disciplining of oneself, and to walk forever in the path of the Absolute (*brahmacarya*).

The Absolute has changing aspects and unchanging eternal aspects, visible aspects as well as invisible aspects. It has programs that can be rationally apprehended and it has an inner reality which is like a closed secret. Our body, sense organs, and conscious mind belong to the changing, perishing, and relativistic aspects of life. We understand part of our lives and we are expected to carry out our assignments of which we have a fairly good notion. Many things are done for us most appropriately without our ever being taken into the intelligence that meticulously cares for our holistic needs. There is a space which we can conveniently limit to apportion in it the amenities of life. There is another space which is neither physical, nor biological, nor even

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psychological. It is capable of bringing the far-off very close to us, and taking the near-by very far from us. It is like a divine hand that is secretly carrying us around in it for the good of all. There is a time which we can program and plan according to our priorities. There is another time which cuts into our lives like an overseeing parental care, changing our schedules and bringing priorities of which we have little knowledge.

The end of this *brāhmaṇa* leads us to a meditation on the *amṛtattva*, the immortal aspect of the Self. A most beautiful exposition of this comes later on in the honey section, in which every mantra closes with the assurance that all this is *amṛtam*, this is *brahman*, this is all. We are seated on this firm ground, terra firma, of our planet earth. This earth is called *pṛthvī*. *Pṛthvī* is compared to a cow from which we can milk every benefit we aspire for. Therefore this earth is like honey to us. Similarly, we care for the earth. We tend it and we make it rich. There is a symbiotic relation between us and earth. The mantra says that all beings are honey to the earth. When we walk on this earth, sit on this earth, dwell on this earth, and have our neighborhood on this earth, we are in perfect union with the reality of earth. Remembering that, we should meditate on the truth of earth and chant in our minds: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.* Our love for this earth is the *sat*. The care of the earth for us is the *jyotis*. Enjoying this earth is to share in the nativity of the earth. This is *amṛtattva*.

The *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* thereafter takes us to the primary source of our life - the water in the oceans, the water in our lakes, rivers, and wells, the moisture in the atmosphere, the water which we consume every day as our food and drink, the nourishing sap of life. The mantra says, "This water is honey to all and all are honey to this water." Our attention is drawn to the *jyotis* in the water, and that is described as the brilliant person, *tejomayo puruṣo*, which makes water our supreme nourishment. Verily this water is honey to us. Outside and inside us there is the water of life in which our organism transforms and carries out all its functions. So we can say with conviction that we who are born out of *retas*, the semen of life, and nurtured in the amniotic fluid, are verily the products of the honey of water. When we live in this world enjoying the showers of rain from above and quenching our thirst with our drinks, we will certainly live for all which is also honey to us. Meditating on this irrefutable existen-

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tial reality of our very being, we meditate on the mantra: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

When the sun appears in the dawn heralding the day, we know that the warmth of the sun is a honey to all beings. The solar light is feeding every form of life by replenishing the exhausted and tired cells which are waking up. There is fire in the sun, there is fire in the sky, there is fire in the cloud, there is fire in the rain, there is fire in growing bushes, trees and creepers, and in the smiling flowers. There is fire in the word, in our breath and, of course, in our thoughts. Pointing out the brilliance of the fire, *jyotis*, we are assured that we are all honey to the fire and the fire is honey to all of us. When we live, there is not only the warmth of fire in our bodies, there is also the warmth in our hearts with which we love. The fire that comes from our friends is perceptible. We can see the flames of it in their eyes, in their words, in their breath, in their embraces and kisses, and in their very presence. So it is easy for us to say we are a honey to the fire and the fire is honey to us. Now we ponder over the effulgence of the fire and the unquenchable warmth of it and we meditate on the mantra: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

We are restless beings always on the move. Even when we are at home, we walk in and out of the home. Some of us even go flying around the world. Wherever we go, air is ready for us there. It is the life-giving *prāṇa*. We cannot afford to miss the *prāṇa*, life-giving breath, even for a couple of minutes. It has to seek and come to our nostrils to keep our respiratory apparatus rhythmically functioning. The *Upaniṣad* assures us that the air is not partial to anyone. It is the life-giving honey to all. What is my breath this moment is your breath the next moment. Thus we are all honey to the air. Like the bees carrying honey from the flowers, the wind comes and carries our breath replete with our thoughts, desires, dreams, and supplications. When we are aware of it gladly we can recite that we are all a honey to the air, and the air is a honey to us. Seeing the pulsating heart of our existence in the *prāṇa* we can say: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

Moments run into seconds, seconds into minutes, minutes into hours, hours into the day, the day into weeks and fortnights, fortnights into months, and months bring the year. We have al-

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ready made a worshipful perambulation around the glorious sun, which presides over the solar system. The planets are like sisters because they are all born of him. So naturally he who maintains our continuity and gives us the concept of the eternal is *ādityа*. The sun is honey to all and we are all honey to the sun. Before the sun is out, petals of the flowers unfurl. It is as if they have already tasted the honey of the sun. Birds fly out of their nests. They watch the sunrise, perching on the branches of trees, and they coo the sweet melody of their gratitude. They all sing, "O sun, you are honey to all of us and we are honey to you." When the birds sing, the sunflower and the lotus look in the direction in which you come. You fondle them with your golden beams because they are a honey to you and they nod their head in gratitude because you are a honey to them. You give everyone the life and warmth they seek. But more than that, the entire world pays homage to you because you are the illuminator. You are the brilliant person, *tejasi*. So you are glorified as the *tejomayo amṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ*. Considering this truth we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

The sun is born in our eyes and the baby sun shows us where the east is. It is this incident every morning that gives us our orientation. We are no longer disoriented people. We are well placed on this good earth. So we sing our hallelujahs to space, to the directions. Now we know what is on our right, and what is on our left, what is in front and what is behind, what is above and what is below. All these directions are like honey to us and we are also honey to the directions. When we know the right direction of life we also know the goal of life. That is our fulfillment. Walking in the right path, heading towards the goal of life we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

When the sun is gone and the veil of darkness hushes all activities, the moon comes in the silence of the night with its pale face and gentle smile. Then we all, including birds and plants, know that the time to rest has come. This need not be a dull pastime for us because the sweetest dreams flow into us like the honey of the night. The moon presides over our dreams. Like a gentle mother she comes to every bed and trickles into our minds the sweet honey of memory. The conceptual world of dreams is far vaster and deeper than the scanty world of perception. The

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moon is honey for us and we are honey to the moon. Now nobody is serious and nothing is really hurtful. Every day can be a Midsummer Night's Dream. Glorifying the honeyed dew of the moonlit night, enjoying the gentle sheen we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

There are arresting moments when the lightning surprises of the ever-abiding wonder of life come to us and we say "Ah!" No word is more appropriate on such occasions than a simple exclamation. In the thick of dark clouds we see a flash of lightning. The same is echoed by the humblest of creatures, the firefly. We walk alone in the dark and there is nothing to see, then, lo! there is a firefly! It only gives a little light but all the darkness put together cannot match the moment's glow that comes from a firefly. With our hearts filled with gratitude we say, "O lightning, you are honey to us and even this little firefly is honey to you. There is *tejas* in it." Recognizing the Supreme shining in this humblest of insects we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

In our hours of hunger we think of the good farmer who produces food and milk. Secretly our prayers are for his response to our needs. The farmer in his turn keeps his vigil and puts all his faith in the cloud that is expected to come as a visitation to his farm. The cloud is like a milk cow to the farmer. It brings the ocean's gifts to wherever the farmer's wheat, paddy fields and orchards are. Nothing gladdens the heart of the farmer more than the rumbling of the clouds. He listens to the thunder clap like a bee listening to the song of a honey-filled flower. "Oh rain bringing cloud! You are honey to us and as farmers we are honey to you also." Even when the lightning is far away, the thunderclap comes so close to give us the gospel of the rain that is coming. When you beat the drum of the rain, please sit and pray: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

My room can only provide shelter for me. The sky which looks like a blue dome above us canopies over hills and dales, mountain ranges, deserts and vast oceans. It is beyond the earth, the sun and the moon. All the stars and all the galaxies are under the sky. The sky is like an angelic bird spreading its wings above all. Its millions of stars are like small eggs over which the mother sky is sitting. She watches our laughter of mirth and dragging moments of anxiety, and says, "Fear not chil-

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dren, nothing can reach you unless I allow it. You are under my wings. You are all like honey to me, and I am your honey." On hearing the words of the sky we sit close to the heartbeat of the world, the *hṛdaya ākāśa*, and we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

When we think of the sky and the extravagance of the universe it blows our mind. In the very next moment we can turn to the purpose for which we have come here. We don't have to carry our earth around the sun or regulate the flight of the planets in their orbits. We don't even have to monitor our heart beats. We don't have to breathe consciously or digest our food. It is all done for us. But we have our little errands to run, our assignments or work to do with care each day. Just as I have my *dharma*, you have yours. Each living being has its biologic *dharma*. Every body part in a living being has its physiologic *dharma*. Even the sodium and potassium in the body's constitution have to watch out for their moments of action. They have the *dharma* of the body's biochemistry. The cognitive mind in us needs to respond to the messages that come through the sensory cables. There are sensory *dharmas* just as there are digestive *dharmas*. *Dharma* is everywhere and it says, "I am supervising you. I am monitoring you. You do your bit. I am honey to all of you, and you are honey to me when you do not fail in your *dharma*." To establish ourselves on the foundation of *dharma* we pray: *asatomā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya*.

Now which of these voices should we harken to? Each one comes to us with intimacy and urgency. The irrefutability of each is the mark of truth, *satyam*. Can there be a greater honey than truth? The wise and the foolish, both are in search of truth. It is *satya* which immortalizes all virtues. Truth is honey to all, and all have to bear witness to the benevolence of truth. Knowing this we pray: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya*.

It is a singular fortune to be placed in the grand system of a universe of enormous dimensions as a sensitive human being with such unfailing devices of perception and a clear mind which knows how to make the right probe into the vastness of this world. In fact, we are honey to the whole world and what is there in this world that we do not enjoy as honey? We are the immortal, the ever-burning flame of the world's conscience. It is

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to this truth that we should adhere. So we pray: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

From the time of the first primates there have been living beings walking on two feet. But what makes one immortal is the unchanging Self, *ātman*. It is never fragmented with the birth and death of individual beings. It is in the Self that all enjoy their immortality, that all find the glow of their life. That is the only abode of truth where one can find fulfillment in its truest sense. Knowing that we chant: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

Ultimately realization comes that the kingdom of the Self is where sovereignty resides. The Self and the non-Self are only the riddles of life. In fact, there is only one shining principle, one world of values, one breathing reality, and to that we surrender everything: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

This Self indeed is the ruler of all beings and the king of all beings. Just as all the spokes are fixed in the hub and the rim of a chariot wheel, so are all beings, all gods, all worlds, all organs, and all the selves fixed in this Self: *asato mā sat gamaya; tamaso mā jyotir gamaya; mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya.*

The lamp that is burning in the prayer hall has a wick made of cotton wool and it is fed by oil. When it is lit it fills the prayer hall with light. What is tangible in this context is the wick and the oil and the unflickering flame in the lamp. These items are indispensable, but the true benefit that comes to everyone present is the silent light that fills the room. The cotton wool, wick, and oil are objective and tangible like the lamp. All the objects illuminated in the room by the light are either visible or tangible. Only the subtle benefit of the light stands apart as an incomprehensible mystery.

When a person sits on the seat of wisdom as a hierarchical Guru, his person can be seen and his body is as objective as the chair on which he is seated. The words that come from his mouth are audible. They can be recorded in a machine or written down in a book. Both the recorded voice and written words are objective and yet what is important is not even the words uttered by him, but he himself - not the person, not his affective voice, not the words he spoke, but his wholesome comprehension of wisdom.

When the sun rises in the east and sets in the west the sky

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changes color and the clouds blush with a golden crimson hue. The panorama that is painted each day is exquisitely beautiful. The same sun shines in the midday sky with a matchless effulgence that can illuminate every heavenly body in the solar system. With a magical power the sun not only holds all the planets around it, but also impels each planet to fly in its orbit at a given pace for millions of years. These heavenly bodies have been dancing around the sun with the same pace and the same rhythm. What is important is not the physical phenomena of the sun and the orbiting planets, but the principle of unity that the sun imparts to every atom that goes into the structure and function of the universe. This mystery is apprehended only by the wise among us. The sun is all-embracing with its light, but it stands apart as one of the many that glorify truth. Even before the earth was formed its futuristic functioning over countless millions of years was planned: the oceans that girdle the earth, the sun that is continuously evaporating all sides of the globe, the vapor that gathers in the sky as floating clouds of enormous beauty, the wind offering itself to be a friendly transporting system to lift clouds from the ocean and bring rain to every inch of ground on the planet to fill rivers, lakes and wells, and give nourishment to all forms of life, whether a blade of grass, or a huge metropolitan city where millions live. All this has a visible side, that is, the ocean, the wind that makes the branches of trees sway or clouds move, the pearl-like raindrops that come from the sky. But nobody sees the benevolence behind it except the poet-bards who glorify this universal love in the praises they sing in their Vedic hymns.

Each cloud approaches the snow-clad mountain peak, the blue lagoon, and lake apologetically, "Am I late?" Birds can fly to where the water is. People can walk to it or can use gadgets to suck it from a distance. Animals can also go to where the water is. Trees are stationary. However, they send their roots like hands stretched underground. The trees have their mouths where the roots reach the water. They take only muddy water, tasteless and having no color. Yet when the same water reaches the trees, flowers bud and fruits ripen. The flowers become filled with honey and both the fruits and flowers are painted in their most attractive colors. That does not fill the trees with pride. The trees overladen with flowers and fruits have no words to speak. The word is the expression of a person's soul. The tree whispers

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to the butterfly, the bee, and the birds: the color and sweetness you see in me are the expressions of my soul." The beautiful beings drawn to the feast laid out by the tree are the seventh or seventieth generation who have come to the same tree for a similar treat season after season.

The lake looks blue, but its water is as clear as the tears of an innocent lover. It provides a mirror for nature to look into. Passing clouds never forget to cast their images on the surface of the lake and in the confection of beauty seen in the reflection there is a philosophy of unity - the sky, the passing sun and moon, the clouds, swaying branches of trees, birds which visit the watery treasure, all blend into a single picture. All images look three-dimensional without having the slightest matter to formulate such a vision. Even then, what matters is not what we see, but a silent thrill in which all sentient beings come together in the joy of being existential and not being pushed away by the impenetrability of matter. A cool dip in the summer heat can be very refreshing to a man who goes to swim in the waters. He may forget that he has a wife at home. It does not matter how handsome he is or how beautiful the wife is. In her there are eggs which wait for sperm to fertilize them. The wife cannot reach the husband who sits far in his forgetfulness. But her prayerful thoughts can ultimately go and haunt him to hurry back to share her bed without which the world cannot continue.

For Japanese poets herons are only poetic ideas to put into haiku. But the herons too are hungry and thirsty. They go to the riverside not only to quench their thirst, but also to catch silvery fishes which are so cunning that they easily slip away before the herons' long necks reach them. The water reservoirs are mindful of the fields where wheat and corn and oats grow. The young shoots of oats which grow in lush green colors love to be eaten by cows. What is important is not the very many items that constitute a situation, but the ingenuity that relates every fragment into a whole which truly represents existence (*sat*), the brilliant glow of manifestation (*jyotis*), and the continuity of the renewed spirit of immortality (*amṛtam*).

Such is the conclusion of the rishi in the twenty-eighth mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

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Brāhmaṇa 4

Mantra 1

atmaivedamagra āsītpuruṣavidhaḥ, so'nuvikṣya nānyadātmano'paśyat, so'ahamasmītyagre vyāharat, tato'hamnāmābhavat; tasmādapyetarhyāmantrito'ham ayamityevāgra uktvāthānyannāma prabrūte yadasya bhavati; sa yatpūrvo'smātsarvasmātsarvān pāpmana ouṣat tasmātpuruṣaḥ; ouṣati ha vai sa tam yo'smātpūrvo bubhūṣati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

agre - in the beginning; *idam* - this (universe); *puruṣavidhaḥ* - like a person; *ātma* - Self, *virāj*; *eva* - verily; *āsīt* - was; *saḥ* - he; *anuvīkṣaya* - pondering; *ātmanaḥ* - than himself; *anyat* - anything; *na* - not; *apaśyat* - beheld; *aham* - I; *saḥ* - he (*virāj*); *asmi* - am; *itī* - this; *agre* - first; *vyāharat* -said; *tataḥ* - therefore; *ahamnāmā* - named I; *abhavat* - became; *tasmāt* - therefore; *etarhi* - now; *api* - ever; *āmantritaḥ* - accosted; *ayam* - it (is); *aham* - I; *itī* - this; *yat* - this; *eva* - only; *agre* - first; *uktvā* - saying; *atha* - then; *asya* - one's; *yat* - which; *anyat* - the other; *nāma* - name; *bhavati* - is; (*tat*) - (that); *prabrūte* - says; *yat* - because; *saḥ* - he; *asmāt sarvasmāt* (*pūrvam*) - before all this (*purvam*); *pūrvaḥ* - being first; *sarvān* - all; *pāpmanaḥ* - evils; *auṣat* - consumed; *tasmāt* - therefore; *puruṣaḥ* - *puruṣa* (one who consumed first); *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* knows; *saḥ* - one; *tam* - anyone *oṣati* - consumes; *ha vai* - verily; *yaḥ* - who; *asmāt* - anyone; *pūrvaḥ* - ahead of; *babhūṣati* - wishes to become

In the beginning, this universe was verily the Self (*virāj*), in the form of a person. He pondered and beheld nothing else but himself. He first said, "I am he." Therefore

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he got the name "I." Hence even now when anyone is accosted, one first says, "It is I," and then tells the other name that one has. Because he was the first (among the aspirants to the status of *prajāpati*), and (before) this whole group consumed all evils, therefore he is called *puruṣa*. One who knows thus verily consumes anyone who wishes to be (*prajāpati*) ahead of one.

We commence the day with the act of waking up. If we were in a state of deep sleep before waking up, there is no way to find out what the state of our mind was and how the person in us was functioning. The very first occurrence of knowledge when we wake up is the conscious recognition of our identity with "I am." "I am" in Sanskrit is *aham asmi*. It is within the ambit of that consciousness that all perceptions, judgements, and memories come one by one, or collectively, and become a variegated matrix of one thing relating to another. What is significant in the wakeful experience is that every idea has to pass through a central focus of attention. It is as if the area of consciousness in us has different grades of brightness and darkness. Only at a central point is the brightness of the Self intimate and acute. Every image, idea or feeling which passes through that particular point of illumination becomes a recognized item. It registers its impact as something which has occurred to the person in the time-space continuum with a beginning of its emergence and a subsequent passing into a closure of an interest. Automatically the finished gestalt becomes a memory of the past. This arrangement of thought happens sequentially. It may take only a split second for an item of the present to pass into the past, but if there is a contiguous meaning in what is passing through a judgement or affective value-appreciation, the item of consciousness may prevail over a relatively long time. In any case time becomes registered and recognized in the coming and going of experience. Thus it becomes imperative to think of a beginning for each experience.

In the present mantra, there is a reference to such a beginning. The second *brāhmaṇa* of the first *adhyāya* also began with a reference to another kind of beginning. We read, "In the beginning there was nothing (to be perceived) here whatsoever. By death indeed all this was concealed - by hunger; for death is hunger." This statement of the *Upaniṣad* is quite valid in the

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context of this verse which presents the idea of the beginning by considering what is before one's waking up. It goes without saying that in deep sleep there is only the unknown, and one is lost in an unconscious state. The beginning spoken of here is more positive and imaginable, and therefore it looks quite appropriate to say, "In the beginning this was Self alone in the form of a person, *puruṣa*."

It is debatable whether a person begins to think with the encounter of the object of perception first, then recognizing one's identity as the perceiver, the subject, or first recognizing oneself as the subject confronted by the object. Life is like music within the flow or stream of consciousness. In music the melody comes with a rhythm. Who can say whether the rhythm was preconceived before the melody was produced, or the melody sets the rhythm. A similar togetherness of subject and object is recognized in terms of the natural alternation in the making of the physical world as it occurs our stream of consciousness. In his commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtras*, Śankara first gives attention to these alternating factors of subject and object. This *brāhmaṇa* is specially devoted to a basic estimation of the decadence of corruption that comes to human individuation and causes a devolution of the Self in which pure consciousness becomes more and more limited in the psychophysical entity called a person.

An appropriate analogy to this is that of an ancient civilization becoming covered up in the long run of history with such decadence that finally the city itself becomes a ruin. The human mind is to be considered as a corrupted fossil of the spirit. Śankara refers to the overgrowth of ignorance that hides the spirit with his famous theory of *māyā*. He refers to two elements: the veiling principle of *āvarṇa* and the projective principle of *vikṣepa*. *Vikṣepa* literally means "a specific deposit." Silt deposited at the mouth of great rivers like the Hoogly in Calcutta has changed the geographic contours of the river bed. Similarly, when alternating sensations of pain and pleasure affect the sensory system, the format of the mind also changes. Human nature changes and becomes molded in a mechanical and compulsive manner. Afterwards and with great effort one can unravel what has already been covered up by years of such deposits. These deposits are what the Vedāntins call *samskāra*. Thus in this mantra, the reader is assigned a responsibility to help the world to rediscover the true and pure spiritual heritage of each

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one's Self. For that reason this section is very important.

Two forms of natural behavior which we see in human beings from early childhood are 'acceptance' and 'avoidance'. When a baby is given a certain kind of drink or food, from its smell, look, or taste, the child may instinctively reject it as something unwholesome. If the stuff has already gone into its mouth, the child spits it out and turns its face in another direction, clearly making a gesture of avoidance. On the other hand, if what is given to the child is agreeable to it, it partakes of it without hesitation. The child may not be always right in its choices of acceptance and avoidance. However, this pattern is going to be repeated all through its life. The act of avoidance is like the burning away of certain unwholesome desires. In the course of time, because of compulsions brought on by ignorant parents, a child may come to accept unpalatable food or wrong values. Because of being brought up in an evil society the child may develop an attitude of acceptance of what it originally avoided. These kinds of acquired habits can virtually crystallize into a morbid state. If the child has knowledgeable parents who are keen on giving instructions about what attractions are healthy and what attractions are unhealthy the child may get disciplined by the parental word of instruction. A reliable parent is like a teacher or knower of truth. The authentic word of such a person is equivalent to the *Vedas*. On the basis of such a criterion we can also say that an infallible word or truth is a declaration which qualifies as a *Veda*. That is why in India a major division is made between word-instructions of infallible perennial truth, called *śruti*, and words of tentative merit, called *smṛti*.

What this mantra wants its reader to know is that through wrong discipline or no discipline a person is likely to accumulate in his or her value appreciation and behavior patterns a number of defective and evil tendencies that can conceal the original innocence, truthfulness, and adorable nature of one's Self. Its place can be taken by something dangerous, antisocial, and evil, amounting to total distortion of truth. So there has to be a method by which the accretions that disfigure the original Self can be destroyed and the clarity of the Self can be totally reclaimed. Only if this is done can one arrive at one's own original state of purity, called *pūrva*. That original form is called *puruṣa*. In this mantra the rishi suggests two important facts about our Self: 1) The form in which a grown up person sees himself or

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herself is not his or her truthful form. It is a falsified and distorted identification. That means the truth of being *(sat)* is veiled by an untrue identification *(asat)*. 2) there is a possibility of regaining one's original and true state by purifying whatever distortion came into one's being with its structural defects and malfunctioning. The rest of this *Upaniṣad* is devoted to the accomplishment of these major corrections of the individual and socio-cultural changes to which one is subject.

Mantra 2

so'bibhet, tasmādekākī bibhetī; sa hāyamīkṣām cakre, yanmadanyannāstī, kasmānnu bibhemīti, tat evāsya bhayam vīyāya, kasmāddhyabheṣyat? dvitīyādvai bhayam bhavati.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he (*virāj*); *abibhet* - was frightened; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ekākī* - when alone; *bibhetī* - one is frightened; *saḥ ha ayam* - he; *īkṣām* - reflection; *cakre* - made; *yat* - since; *mat anyat* - anything other than myself; *na* - not; *astī* - there is; *kasmāt nu* - of what; *bibhemi* - am (I) afraid; *iti tataḥ* - from that; *eva* - alone; *asya* - his; *bhayam* - fear; *vīyāya* - departed; *kasmāt* - of what; *hi* - for; *abheṣyat* - should (he) be afraid; *dvitīyāt* - from a second (entity); *vai* - only; *bhayam* - fear; *bhavati* - comes

He was frightened. Therefore one is (still) frightened when one is alone. He reflected, "Since there is nothing besides myself, what am I afraid of ?" From that alone his fear departed, for what should he be afraid of ? Fear comes only from a second entity.

The opening mantra says that the universal Self, *virāj*, manifested first as a person. Finding no one other than himself, he is frightened. In the second *brāhmaṇa*, when the first phenomenon of the world was described as all-enveloping death, we were told

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that death was in the form of fear. Now once again we hear of fear. There is no reason to be afraid when one is alone and yet there is fear. Irrational fear is characteristic of the human mind. In many people, fear grows into pathologic dimensions. When there is some cause for anxiety, such as physical disease, indication of insecurity, or mental discomfort, the mind has a tendency to snowball its apprehension and become fearful. Fear is the main dynamic of disease, whether physical or mental. Western psychologists like Freud and Jung considered that therapy for such an abnormality can be given by proving to the patient that his or her fear was only imaginary. Afterwards this kind of therapy became a well-established psycho-therapeutic method. In this mantra an adequate remedy is mentioned to avert fear. *Virāj* reflects, "Since there is nothing besides myself, what am I afraid of?" From that alone his fear departed, for what should he be afraid of? Fear comes only from a second entity.

Human life is always riddled with opposites. Even when a person is apprehensive of insecurity, he or she will also entertain the hope that the threat of insecurity will ultimately disappear. Attributing fear and hope to *virāj* is to show that such a duality is shared by all living beings. We can see that even lower animals such as mice, birds, rabbits, snakes and insects are motivated on one side with curiosity and on the other side with fear. Most people are terribly afraid if they are isolated and become lonely. At the same time, those who are seeking spiritual beatitude welcome any chance to be alone and aloneness is adored as a spiritual gift. In fact, the highest goal of yoga is *kaivalya*, the aloneness of the Self. With the reference to fear and fearlessness in this mantra, we are introduced to this classical problem with which all living beings are confronted.

Mantra 3

sa vai naiva reme, tasmādekākī na ramate; sa dvitīyamaicchat. sa haitāvānāsa yathā strīpumāmsau samparişvaktau; sa imamevātmānam dvedhāpātayat, tataḥ patiśca patnī cābhavatām; tasmādidamardhabṛgalamiva sva iti ha smāh yājñavalkyaḥ, tasmādayamākāśaḥ strīyā pūryat eva; tām samabhavat, tato manuşyā ajāyanta.

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Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *vai* - verily; *na* - not; *eva* - at all; *reme* - felt happy; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ekākī* - when alone; *na* - not; *ramate* - feels happy; *saḥ* - he; *dvitīyam* - a mate; *ecchat* - desired. *saḥ ha* - he; *etāvān* - as large as; *āsa* - became; *yathā* - as; *strī pumāmsau* - man and wife; *samparisvaktau* - embracing each other; *saḥ* - he; *imam* - this; *eva* - very; *ātmānam* - body; *dvedhā* - into two; *apātayat* - divided; *tataḥ* - from that; *patiḥ ca* - husband; *patnīḥ* - wife; *ca* - and; *abhavatām* - came into being; *tasmāt* - therefore; *idam* - this (body); *svaḥ* - of oneself; *ardhabṛgalam* - half of a two-celled seed; *iva* - is like; *iti* - so; *yājñavalkyaḥ* - Yājñavalkya; *āh sma* - said; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ayam* - this; *ākāśaḥ* - void; *strīyā* - by the wife; *pūryate* - is filled; *eva* - verily; *tām* - with her; *samabhavat* - (he) united; *tataḥ* - from that; *manuṣyāḥ* - human beings; *ajāyanta* - were born

Verily he did not at all feel happy. Therefore one (still) does not feel happy when alone. He desired a mate. He became of the size of a man and wife embracing each other. He divided this very body into two. From that, husband and wife came into being. "Therefore this body (of a man) is one-half of himself, like half of a two-celled seed," so said Yājñavalkya. Hence this void is verily filled by the wife. He united with her. From that human beings were born.

What is presented in this mantra is a speculation about the manifestation of man and woman as mates and the prospective parents of the human race. This stands in contrast with the Semitic theory. What is presented in the Semitic scripture is God commencing the genesis with the creation of the male and the female. The model given is of creating Eve out of a rib of Adam. In the present mantra God's place is taken by the archetypal model of the first manifestation of life, *prajāpati*. The earlier reference was of the loneliness of *prajāpati* and his reflection on fear engendered in him by his being alone. He allayed his fear with the thought that there was no need for fear when there is not anyone

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other than himself. The very idea of another brought to him the desire to have a companion. *Prajāpati* did not look for external help to get a companion. He made himself as big as a man and woman holding each other in an embrace.

Probably this idea of the rishi must have come from seeing the cotyledons of plants. When a seed is sprouting, two symmetrical halves of a cotyledon are seen on either side of the sprout. The quantitative and qualitative sameness of these must have suggested to the rishi the equality of the human male and female. Although in those days of yore the rishi had no insight into genes and chromosomes, he was accurate in presuming that there should be quantitative and qualitative parity in the composition of the material that goes into the making of both the male and the female. Today we know that both the male and the female have twenty-three pairs of chromosomes. In the present study two exact halves of one person are relegated one to become a male and the other a female. This theory has the merit that it was not conceived with any male chauvinistic prejudice. No superiority is attributed to one gender to rule the other. This theory has another merit too: neither half has any claim to perfection. The male is as incomplete as the female. That fact instills in each one a craving to be united with the other half for completion. As this is a very naturalistic theory, no puritanical moralism is attributed to the sexual origin of progeny. It is only a sacred act for male and female to cohabit to bring forth their children.

The complementarity of man and woman is described in this mantra as two symmetric models in which the holes in one half are filled by the projections of the other half. This is literally so between man and woman, especially when they hold each other in an embrace, holding their two hands with their fingers interlocked, their pairs of lips joined in a kiss, and their procreative organs united with the male organ inserted into the female and their legs intertwined. The act of coitus is described later as the most enjoyable bliss that happens in the union of man and woman. In all erotic literature of mysticism, man-woman love is glorified as a perfect model of *bhakti*.

This is the first time in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that a rishi is mentioned by name. This theory is said to have come from Yājñavalkya, who will figure several more times in the course of the text of the *Upaniṣad* as one of the wisest teachers of India.

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Mantra 4

so heyamīkṣām cakre, katham nu mātmana eva janayitvā sambhavati? hanta itaro'sānīti; sā gaurabhavat, ṛṣabha itaraḥ, tām samevābhavat, tato gāvo'jāyanta; vadavetarābhavat, aśvavṛṣa itaraḥ; gardabhītarā, gardabha itaraḥ, tām samevābhavat, tata ekaśaphamajāyata; ajetarābhavat, vasta itaraḥ, avitarā, meṣa itaraḥ, tām samevābhavat, tato'jāvyo'jāyanta; evameva yadidam kiñca mithunam ā pipīlikābhyaḥ tatsarvamasṛjata.

Word Meanings

sā - she; *u ha* - on her part; *iyam* - this; *īkṣām* - reflection; *cakre* - made; *ā* - we; *ātmanaḥ* - from self; *eva* - one; *janayitvā* - were created; *katham nu* - how; *sambhavati* - does (he) unite with; *hanta* - well; *itaraḥ asāni* - let me disappear; *sā* - she; *gauḥ* - a cow; *abhavat* - became; *itaraḥ* - the other; *ṛṣabhaḥ* - a bull; *tām* - her; *samabhavat eva* - did unite with; *tataḥ* - from that; *gāvaḥ* - cows; *ājāyanta* - were born; *itarā* - the one; *vaḍavā* - a mare; *abhavat* - became; *itaraḥ* - the other; *aśvavṛṣaḥ* - a stallion; *itarā gardabhī* - a she-ass; *itaraḥ gardabhaḥ* - a he-ass; *tām samabhavat eva, tataḥ ekaśapham* - the class of one-hoofed animals (horse, mules and asses); *ajāyat; itarā ajā* - a she-goat; *abhavat, itaraḥ vastaḥ* - a he-goat; *itarā avīḥ* - a ewe; *itaraḥ meṣaḥ* - a ram; *tām samabhavat eva, tataḥ aja avyaḥ* - goats and sheep; *ajāyanta; evam eva* - in this very way; *ā pipīlikābhyaḥ* - down to ants; *yat kim ca idam* - whatever here; *mithunam* - (exists in) couples; *tat* - that; *sarvam* - all; *asṛjata* - (were) created

She on her part reflected, "How can he unite with me after we were created from one self? Well, let me disappear." She became a cow. The other became a bull and did unite with her. From that cows were born. The one became a mare and the other a stallion; the one a she-ass, the other a he-ass, and he did unite with her. From that one-hoofed animals were born. The one became a

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she-goat, the other a he-goat; the one a ewe, the other a ram; and he did unite with her. From that goats and sheep were born. In this very way were created whatever exists as couples, down to ants.

This mantra brings us to another progressive level in the cultural and social growth of humanity. The study of *prajāpati* was mainly confined to the laws of biology. When we take human beings as a species by themselves, they have a marked difference from all other animal species. They are homo sapiens. They think. Thinking in Sanskrit is called *manana*. So this species is called *manuṣya*. The archetypal man is Manu. Clear thinking is possible only by evolving systems. Systematization is done by categorization and classification. Classification, categorization, enumeration, analysis, synthesis, composition, and all such are made possible by clearly seeing the underlying subtle laws that govern systems. The archetypal man, *Manu*, is therefore looked upon also as the archetypal law giver. His female counterpart is Śatarūpa which literally means "one with a hundred forms." (*Śata* is hundred; *rūpa* is forms.)

In the mantra under discussion, we are introduced to the reflection of the female counterpart of the law giver who was instrumental in the multiplication of the species. In the progressive evolution of life, instinctive lower intelligence is shared by all alike. At a certain stage the unconscious ability of intelligence gives way to cogitation and conscious manipulation of things with actions that are planned in advance and executed with deliberation. The rational animal is also part and parcel of the biologic world. However, in the rational being there are more specialized coordinations. Modern scientists are also of the opinion that the stream of life forks and branches off into distinct directions. One stream continues in the specialized activities of instinct and the other stream makes new advances in progressive intelligence. Both have a common ancestral origin. *Prajāpati*, being the first model of life, is looked upon as the common father of all living beings. Out of him evolves the intelligent being.

Humans are the first animals who developed a sense of morality. Mores or conventional behavior are part of systematizing social life. To avoid rivalry and fights among members of the same species, human beings instituted the ritual purity of marri-

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age. The convention came that it is immoral for a man to cohabit with his mother, sister, or daughter. Dishonoring this convention is considered incest. In this mantra, the idea of incest is presented. Manu, being the first rational animal, is the father of the human species. Śatarūpa, the female, also came from *prajāpati*. So she can be considered his sister. As Manu accepted Śatarūpa as his spouse he united with her. She, on her part, thought that it was an immoral act to cohabit with her brother, so she tried to avoid him by changing her form from a human being to that of a cow. Then Manu became a bull and united with her. Thus whatever species we see among the living beings were all born of the transformations of Śatarūpa. This mantra is given to impart the unity of all living beings and to help us think of every being as an integral part of our own Self.

In human social contact, love and compassion are tempered with restraint and care. It is significant that here the moral restraint comes from the female. Delicate feelings of shame, guilt, and the need to restrain herself from immoral activity became in due course a second characteristic of the female. In the Indian theory of creation and social formation, man is responsible for the temptation and sinful life of woman. This view is in contradiction to the Christian belief that Eve led to man's fall by tempting man to disobey God. Such notions are far-fetched to a normal Indian to whom woman is sacred and where family unity is built on the foundations of the woman's moral sense. In the cataloguing of transformations of Śatarūpa all species from human beings to ants are included. Christians speak of the fatherhood of God whereas Hindus put their emphasis on the common womb from which all beings have come. This aspect they call *sahodarya* (*saḥ* + *udaraḥ* = sharing the same belly, born of the same mother). This gives a reason to love all and not to break any moral restriction kept between members of a society.

A question may be asked why the form of the species was chosen by Śatarūpa and why Manu changed into all the forms chosen by her. The female represents nature or *prakṛti*. Therefore it is only natural for Śatarūpa to decide what each species should look like. Once *prakṛti* has chosen the forms like cow, horse, goat, etc., Manu as the law giver has to instill in that particular species the law governing that particular kind.

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Mantra 5

so'vate, aham vāva sṛṣṭirasmi, aham hīdam sarvamasṛkṣīti; tataḥ sṛṣṭirabhavat; sṛṣṭayām hāsyaitasyām bhavati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he *(virāj); avet* - knew; *aham* - I; *vāva* - indeed; *sṛṣṭiḥ* - creation; *asmi* - am; *aham* - I; *hi* - because; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *asṛkṣi* - created *iti; tataḥ* - hence; *sṛṣṭiḥ* - creation; *abhavat* - (he) became (known as); *yaḥ* - who; *evam* thus; *veda* - knows; *asya* - of *virāj; tasyām sṛṣṭyām* - in this creation; *bhavati* - (one) becomes (a creator); *ha* - indeed

He knew, "I am indeed the creation, because I created all this." One who knows thus becomes (a creator) in the creation of *virāj.*

The Sanskrit word *sṛṣṭi* is not the same as what is called creation by people in the West. *Srj* means projection. When a seed becomes wet it swells up. The skin or shell of the seed breaks. Part of it is projected as the sprout and the root. When something latent in a hidden potential presents itself as a manifestation, that alone is called *sṛṣṭi.* When we go to sleep we do not have dreams in our minds. Out of nowhere hills and dales, gardens and groves, cities and forests, and people of all looks come into our consciousness. Among them some speak, some cry, and some laugh. All these are projections. Out of the nebula a whole galaxy comes. That is a projection too. Apart from the projection, there is no creator as such. The projection, the principle implied in it, the law operating in it and the intelligence that gives organization to the projection are all put together to conceal the projector. When a projector is given an anthropomorphic agency of manipulation it is called the creator. This has no similarity to "God the Creator" which Semitic religions speak of as creating a world apart from himself. That which transforms into the world itself is the potential basis for manifestation and all its transformation.

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When the nucleus of an energy transforms into a quantitative mass of enormous dimension, the origin gets lost in the process of elaboration. Human beings understand only when they describe a process which is similar to the functioning of the human mind. Thus humans make the creator God in their image. The theory propounded here is of a self-projecting principle (*svayambhū*) which from a single origin goes into diverse elaboration. Only if one sees that all its ramifications are an organic whole, will one do justice to what is presented here as an act of creation, the series created, and the ever-improving creative intelligence within it. We will be closer to the original mantra if we translate it as follows:

> That knew that it was indeed the projection. It had for its central nucleus a consciousness which recognized itself as subsisting existence and thus everything implied in its elaboration was a corporeal projection. The substance that is distributed in the whole of it is actually without division, and it is the same Self in all its parts.

Mantra 6

> *athetyabhyamanthat, sa mukhācca yonerhastābhyām cāgnimasṛjata; tasmādetadubhayamalomakamantaraḥ, alomakā hi yonirantarataḥ. tadyadidamāhuḥ; amum yajāmum yajeti, ekaikam devam, etasyaiva sā visṛṣṭiḥ, eṣa u hyeva sarve devāḥ. atha yatkiñcedam ārdram tadretaso'sṛjata, tadu somaḥ; etāvadvā idam sarvam, annam caivānnādaśca; soma evānnam, agnirannādaḥ; saiṣā brahmaṇo'tisṛṣṭiḥ. yacchreyaso devānasṛjata, atha yanmartyaḥ sanamṛtānasṛjata tasmādatisṛṣṭiḥ; atisṛṣṭayām hāsyaitasyām bhavati ya evam veda.*

Word Meanings

atha - then *iti* - thus; *abhyamanthat* - (he) churned; *saḥ* - he; *yoneḥ* - from its (source); *sukhāt ca* - from the mouth; *hastābhyām* - from the hands; *ca* - and; *agnim* - fire; *asṛjata* - created; *tasmāt* - therefore; *etat* - this; *abhyam* -

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both (are); *antarataḥ* - within; *alomakam* - hairless; *tat* - there (in sacrifices); *amum* - to this; *yaja* -sacrifice; *anum* - to the other; *yaja iti, idam yat* - what; *ekaikam* - each separate; *devam* - god; *āhuḥ* - (the priests) speak of; *etasya* - of him; *eva* - alone (is); *sā* - that; *visṛṣṭiḥ* - multiple projection; *eṣaḥ* - he (*virāj*); *hi* - for; *u eva* - himself (is); *sarve* - all; *devāḥ* - the gods; *atha* - now; *yat kiṁ ca idam* - whatever here; *ārdram* - (is) liquid; *tat* - that; *retasaḥ* - from the seed; *asṛjata* - (he) created; *tat u* - that; *somaḥ* - (is) the moon; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *etāvat* - (is) this much; *vai* - verily; *annam ca* - food; *annādaḥ* - the eater of food; *ca* - and; *eva* - only; *somaḥ* - the moon; *eva* - indeed (is); *annam* - food; *agniḥ* - fire; *annādaḥ* - (is) the eater of food; *sā* - that; *eṣā* - this *brahmaṇaḥ* - of *brahman (virāj)*; *atisṛṣṭiḥ* - surpassing creation; *yat* - that; *śreyasaḥ* - greater (than he); *devān* - gods; *asṛjata* - (he) created; *atha* well; *yat* - because; *martyaḥ* - mortal; *san* - being; *amṛtān* the immortals; *asṛjata* - created; *tasmāt* - therefore; *atisṛṣṭiḥ* - (this is) a surpassing creation; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* thus; *veda* - knows; *asya* - of *virāj*; *etasyām atisṛṣṭyām* - in this surpassing creation; *bhavati* - (one) becomes (a creator); *ha* - indeed

Then he churned (his mouth) thus. He created fire from its source - the mouth and hands. Therefore both of them are hairless within. When people say, "Sacrifice to this god," "Sacrifice to that god," considering them as separate gods, (they are mistaken, since) they are but the multiple projections of him alone. For he himself is all the gods. Now whatever is liquid in this world, he created from his seed. That is the moon. This universe is verily this much - food and the eater of food only. The moon indeed is food, and fire the eater of food. This is a surpassing creation of *brahman* (*virāj*), because he created the gods, who are even better than he. Inasmuch as, being himself mortal, he created the immortals, therefore this is a surpassing creation. One who knows thus becomes (a creator) in this creation of *virāj*.

He who thinks is the thinker, he who speaks is the speaker,

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and he who walks is the walker. It is the role-playing that gives a corresponding status to the player of the roles. Creation began as a manipulation to meet the need to provide for food and to avert death. *Prajāpati*, by sheer intention, projected itself. As contingent necessities, the elements of water, fire, and earth also come to be from the exertion of the *prajāpati*. It is from this incident the *prajāpati* came to realize that it had become a *sṛṣṭa*, a projector of everything that came to manifest.

Unlike in the Semitic concept of creation, in the *Upaniṣads*, it is not an act of creation that brings about the world and its occupants. It is an event of self-manifestation monitored by the dialectical polarity of hunger and a resourceful potential for nourishment. Like the yin and yang of the Taoist, the dialectical pairs are death and life. The continuous chain of thesis and antithesis giving rise to synthesis and the synthesis bearing in its bosom the seeds of further polarity is the dynamic of the ever-elaborating chain of manifestation which passes through the triple stages of chaos, love and order. *Prajāpati* gave rise to the dialectical polarity of the shining ones (*devas*) and the dark forces (*asuras*). The encounter between these opposites brought through their synthesis the *ayāsya aṅgirasa*. That gave rise to the dialectical bipolarity of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) and the word (*vāk*). The word became the praise of the *ṛg* and the *prāṇa* made it the song of the *sāma*. From that arose *brahmaṇaspati*. The burnt sacrifice (*yajus*) is an unavoidable concomitant factor of the *ṛg* and the *sāma*.

The fire for sacrifice is made by churning. To cause friction between pieces of firewood the hands have to pull the churning string in an alternating manner just as it was done in the legendary churning by the *devas* and the *asuras*. This is accomplished by the chanting of the *ṛg* rendered into *sāma*. The manifestation of the sacrificial fire is traced to the palm of the hands and the mouth. The proof is that there is no hair on the palms and in the mouth.

We have already seen that the worship of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is neither to a plurality of gods nor to an extraneous entity. *Prajāpati* originally did *arcana* only to himself. He is convinced that there is no other reality but himself. Out of his seed he generated the procreative liquid of the semen. The semen implies in it the mental state of procreative imagination or intentionality. So it is symbolized by the lunar influence. It is spoken

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of as the moon. Love is manifested out of the lunar influence. It brings the generative liquids of coitus and the warmth for the generation of the progeny. The first hunger between the spouses is unsatiated desire to love and be loved. Then there is the hunger of the ovum to swallow the sperm. Then there is the hunger for nourishment of the fetus. After the child's birth the hunger is for physical nourishment. This is what ensues from the result of manifestation to the emergence of the grand eater, the cosmic principle that is all-pervading, the *brahman*. Hence the birth of the *virāj* is considered a super birth. This is a case of the mortal giving birth to the immortal. The knower of this becomes identified with the immortal - *brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati*, "the knower of *brahman* becomes *brahman* itself."

Mantra 7

taddhedam tarhyavyākṛtamāsīt, tannāmarūpābhyāmeva vyākriyata, asaunāmāyamidamrūpa itī; tadidamapyetarhi nāmarūpābhyāmeva vyākriyate, asaunāmāyamidamrūpa itī; sa eṣa iha praviṣṭaḥ. ā nakhāgrebhyaḥ, yathā kṣuraḥ kṣuradhāne'vahitaḥ syāt, viśvambharo vā viśvambharakulāye; tam na paśyanti. akṛtsno hi saḥ, prāṇanneva prāṇo nāma bhavati. vadan vāk, paśyamaścakṣuḥ, śṛṇvan śrotram, manvāno manaḥ; tānyasyaitāni karmanāmānyeva. sa yo't ekaikamupāsate na sa veda, akṛtsno hyeso't ekaikena bhavati; ātmetyevopāsīt, atra hyete sarva ekam bhavanti. tadetatpadanīyamasya sarvasya yadayamātmā, anena hyetatsarvam veda. yathā ha vai padenānuvindedevam; kīrtim ślokam vindate ya evam vedà.

Word Meanings

tarhi - then; *idam* - this; *tat ha* - that; *avyākṛtam* - unmanifested; *āsīt* - was; *tat* - it; *asaunāmā* - called so and so; *idamrūpaḥ* - of such and such form; *itī* - thus; *nāmarūpābhyām* - as name and form; *eva* - only; *vyākriyata* - manifested itself; *tat* - so; *etarhi* - now; *api* - even; *idam*- it; *asaunāmā* - (is) of such and such name;

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ayam - it; *idamrūpaḥ* - (is) of such and such form; *iti* - thus; *nāmarūpābhyām* -as name and form; *eva* - only; *vyākriyate* - is manifested; *saḥ* - that; *eṣaḥ* - this (Self); *iha* - here, into all bodies; *ā* - up to; *nakhāgrebhyaḥ* - the nail-ends; *praviṣṭhaḥ* - has penetrated; *yathā* - just as; *kṣuradhāne* - in the razor case; *kṣuraḥ* - a razor; *avahitaḥ syāt* - may lie; *viśvambharaḥ* - fire which sustains the universe; *vā* - or; *viśvambhara-kulāye* - in the source (wood etc) of fire. *tam* - it; *na* - not; *paśyanti* - (people) realize; *saḥ* - it (viewed piecemeal); *hi* - for; *akṛtsnaḥ* - (is) incomplete; *prāṇan* - performing breathing etc.; *eva* - only; *prāṇaḥ nāma* - called the vital force; *bhavati* - (it) is; *vadan* - speaking; *vāk* - speech (speaker); *paśyan* - seeing; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye (seer); *śṛṇvan* - hearing; *śrotram* - the ear (listener), *manvānaḥ* - thinking; *manaḥ* - the mind (thinker); *tāni* - those; *etāni* - these; *asya* - its; *karmanāmāni* - names due to functions; *eva* - merely; *saḥ* - he; *yaḥ* - who; *ataḥ* -of this (totality); *ekaikam* - each (aspect); *upāsate* - meditates upon; *saḥ* - one; *na* - not; *veda* - knows; *ataḥ* - of this (totality); *hi* - because; *ekaikena* - (qualified) by each aspect; *eṣaḥ* - it; *akṛtsnaḥ* - incomplete; *bhavati* - is; *ātmā* - the (Supreme) Self; *iti* - as; *eva* - only; *upāsīta* - (one) should meditate upon (it); *atra* in it; *hi* - because; *ete* - these; *sarve* - all; *ekam* - one; *bhavanti* - become; *asya* - of this; *sarvasya* - all; *tat* that; *etat* - this; *yat* - which (is); *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - Self; *padanīyam* - (is) to be known; *anena* - through it; *hi* - because; *etat* - this; *sarvam* - all; *veda* - (one) knows; *yathā ha vai* - just as; *padena* - through (its) footprints; *anuvindet* - (one) traces (a missing animal); *evam* - similarly; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *kīrtim* - reputation, knowledge of unity; *ślokam* - (and) company (of relatives), liberation; *vindate* - attains

This universe was then unmanifested. It manifested itself only as name and form -- it got such and such name and such and such form. So even now the universe is manifested only as name and form -- it gets such and such name and such and such form. This (Supreme) Self has penetrated into all these bodies up to the nail-ends -- just as a razor lies in its case, or as fire lies in its

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source. People do not realize it, for it is incomplete (when viewed as doing particular functions). When it only performs breathing etc., it is called the vital force; when it speaks, the vocal organ (i.e. the speaker); when it sees, the eye (seer); when it hears, the ear (listener); when it thinks, the mind (thinker); (and so on). These are but its names due to functions. One who meditates upon each aspect of this totality does not know, because, being qualified by each aspect of the totality, it is incomplete. One should meditate upon it only as the Supreme Self, because in it all these become one. Of all these, this entity called the Self alone is to be known, because one knows all these through it just as one can find (a missing animal) through its footprints. One who knows thus attains knowledge of unity and liberation.

This mantra begins with the word *idam*, meaning "this." "This" can imply a space and its contents. To that a time factor is also added by saying *tarhi*, meaning "then." It is very interesting how the rishi always begins with an intimate experience. Nothing can be more intimate to a person then what one experiences in the here and now. The word "here" gets meaning only when it is related to "this." On seeing something it is only natural for a person to ask "What is this?" That question is a commencement of either a short or long inquiry. The first thing that occurs to a mind is to predicate something to the subject "this." "This" can be singular and it is most probable that it is connected with another "this" and perhaps with many such "this-es." Each time a "this" is predicated it gets a specific status of its own with a name that becomes an appellation for a form. More and more inquiry means adding more and more names and forms. The human mind has a special knack to relate similar things and differentiate them from dissimilar things. That is how a system science evolves. Putting together things of common affinity or likeness is the science of creating the universe. If the relational property is not discovered, what we hear, see, and touch remain heterogeneous. The homogeneity we effect is not a physical relationship. We do not pin or bind things together or gather them and put them in a basket. Instead we mentally conceive classes. To classify and group any number of things we don't have to

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physically touch anything. By mentally arranging names and forms a certain unity is established between multifarious things and we naturally get a compactly arranged universe. Things can be excuses for elaboration with ideas and emotional values. We are always engaged in a tireless pursuit of organizing the universe in which we live. When everything is organically put together even similarity and dissimilarity assume certain relationships, either of unity or polarity or bipolarity. The main element that is chosen for relating things in the universe is their shape *(ākṛti)*. A shape with a specific intention is called *vyākṛti*. The process by which such specific shapes are brought together to account for natural or artificial functions is called *vyākaraṇam*. It is as if things have a grammar of their own. In the science of grammar, words are put together to have meaning. Similarly, when a word has meaning it is called *vyākṛti*. Indian atomists think that the most basic constituent of life is an atom, which they call *kaṇam* or *aṇu*. The concept of *kaṇam* in the Vaiśeṣika philosophy is that it has no dimension. It is as if it is bodiless. So naturally it has no location. Even when it has two dimensions which come into being with the combination of two atoms it is not perceptible. Only when three *aṇus* are combined do they occupy space and time. The world comes into being only when the basic constituents have a name and form to be recognized.

Another important thing which the rishi wants us to know is the unifying factor in the unity of names and forms. The subtle idea of something more comprehensive than idea that can hold together all parts with an inner cohesion of homogeneity is none other than what is usually termed as the Self. Hence the rishi says that the Self that holds together bodies is like the sword in a sheath in which the sharp edges and point fill the entire sheath. The relationship between the container and the contained is very much like the *dharma* and the *dharmi*. For instance, in the case of an orange, the orange is the *dharmi*. Its spherical shape, orange color, juice and fragrance are all *dharmas* which are inseparable from the orange, the *dharmi*. Yet there is no *dharmi* without the *dharmas*. Every conceptual understanding has in it a simultaneously operating analysis and synthesis which is too fast to be discerned, called *bhānavṛtti*. The Self operating in an organism is simple. At the same time, it has in it a number of dual functions that are held together and are almost unnoticeable, like the blinking of the eyes, the respiration of the lungs, and

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the diastole and systole of the heart. The whole mechanism is beset with powerful operating devices such as release and control, emission and input, firing and pause. At a given time only a fraction of these phenomena are explicit to one's awareness. The glow of consciousness and the fading out of awareness, the most willful action dynamic and a totally withdrawn silent state of inertia, a gnawing thirst to be or to possess and the most spontaneous outflow of generous sharing are all to be put together to know what the Self is. When it breathes we recognize either an outflow or inflow of air and accordingly call it *prāṇa* or *apāna*. When the larynx is stimulated and a volley of words come from the organ of speech as an outburst, we recognize it as speech, and on experiencing a gestaltation of a picturesque form we think of the Self as the seer. It is always a function that merits a name being given to a faculty. We are all the time knowing something of the Self and at the same time there is a general non-knowledge of it.

What is true of the supreme Self is also true of what we call the world. Although knowledge is one and is not broken anywhere, the cognizing consciousness jumps to one corner and calls itself the knower and then shifts to another corner and converts the knowledge into a phenomenon which the knower is outside of. This double game which is played with great ingenuity provides the opportunity to imagine the phenomenon of mind. It is and it is not at the same time. So long as we converge to a point *(idam)*, we are doomed to know only the trifle. Only when a total identity is established between the entire faculty that is knowing and the entire object that is being known does the Self become a unitive reality out of which time and space, name and form, the actor and the action, the enjoyer and the enjoyed, are all instantaneously manifested. One who knows thus attains reputation *(kīrti)*, which is a phenomenal effect. The noumenal gain is freedom from oneself. Śankara glorifies it, saying, "The penetration of the Self into all bodies from that of *hiraṇyagarbha* down to the tiniest clump of grass is like the reflection of sun in water."

Mantra 8

tadetatpreyaḥ putrāt, preyo vittāt, preyo'nyasmāt-sarvasmāt antarataram, yadayamātmā. sa yo'nyam-

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ātmanaḥ priyam bruvāṇam brūyāt, priyam rotsyatīti, īśvaro ha, tathaiva syāt; ātmānameva priyamupāsīta; sa ya ātmānameva priyamupāste na hāsya priyam pramāyukam bhavati

Word Meanings

tat etat - this above-mentioned entity; *putrāt* - than a child; *preyaḥ* - (is) dearer; *vittāt* - than wealth; *preyaḥ* - (is) dearer; *anyasmāt sarvāt* - than all other (objects); *preyaḥ* - (is) dearer; *antarataram* - inner; *yat* - which (is); *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - Self; *saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *ātmanaḥ* - than Self; *anyam* - anything else; *priyam* - as dear; *bruvāṇam* - to one describing; *brūyāt* - may say; *priyam* - dear (object); *rotsyati* - will perish; *iti* - thus; *tathā* - like that; *eva* - certainly; *syāt* - (it) will be; *īśvaraḥ* - is capable (of saying so); *ha* - indeed; *ātmānam* - upon the Self; *eva* - alone; *priyam* - (as) dear; *upāsīta* - (one) should meditate; *saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *ātmānam* upon the Self; *eva* - alone; *priyam* - as dear; *upāsate* - meditates; *asya* - one's; *priyam* - dear (object); *na* - not; *ha* - certainly; *pramāyukam* - short-lived; *bhavati* - is

This Self is dearer than a child, dearer than wealth, dearer than all other objects, being nearer (than everything). If any one (holding the Self as dearest) says to a person describing anything other than the Self as dear, "What is dear to you will perish," it will certainly be like that, for one is indeed capable of saying so. (Therefore) one should meditate upon the Self alone as dear. To one who meditates upon the Self alone as dear, no dear object is short-lived.

In the closing mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa* we came upon this prayer: "May I be taken from the unreal to the real; may I be taken from darkness to light; may I be taken from death to immortality." Truth, brilliance or vivid awareness, and immortality or an unexpended plenum of value are not three separate entities. On hearing any one of these terms the other terms auto-

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matically come to connote the given term. What enhances the value of truth and the knowledge of truth is the dear value which is implied in both of these terms. Nothing is more axiomatically known to oneself than one's own truthful existence. Only something which figures as a matter of absolute certitude to the Self is considered a self-founded truth, or axiomatic truth, which needs no proof. Such axiomatic truth is described in Sanskrit as *svātma niścaya*, truth which brings conviction to one's own Self.

The sun is the brightest source of light. Light is called *jyotis* and yet mere sunlight is no comparison to the light of Self-awareness. Even when there is no sun, moon, stars, fire or lightning, one can experience one's own thoughts and reasoning brighter than any phenomenal light. Hence, the inner knowledge of the Self is considered to be even brighter than the sun. The world of *samsāra* is what a seeker of truth abhors as a world of darkness. When one prays, *tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*, the prayer is for one to be taken away from *samsāra* to the clear knowledge of the Self. When truth is a persistent awareness, it is not only an existential certitude, but also a joy which knows no bounds. When a person is immersed in joy, time is not noticed at all. Death is the most threatening imposition of time. When there is nothing to darken the dear presence of the Self, time is forgotten. Hence immortality is identified with a joy that surpasses everything else. For that reason it is sometimes called bliss or beatitude. It is eventless. Beauty is another dear experience to all people. Hence it is said that the Self is dearer than all other objects. Even when we experience an object, what sustains our interest in the object is our attraction to whatever value it has. If its value is immense, our interest will also last until its value fades out in our mind. The purpose of the legendary churning of the milk ocean was to get *amṛtam*, a drink that would bring immortality to the drinker. It is mentioned here that the Self itself is that dear immortality.

There are relative values and the absolute value of the Self. Any value which is partial and conditional can sustain itself only until one comes to know the incomparable absolute truth. Just as the firefly is no longer seen when the sun comes, all other values fade out on experiencing the absolute Self. This is spoken of in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* as *bhūmavu*. In comparison to *bhūmavu* all other values in life are considered petty *(tuccha)*. The *bhūmavu* is the *summum bonum* of values. After gaining this, one

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is not desirous of gaining anything else. It is the value of all values. It is advised that one should meditate on the Self as the dearest of all values. As the Self is the all, the immortal, which reveals the truth that is innate and implied in everything, the knower of it sees the same truth in everything else. He or she is no longer bound by either the regret of having lost anything or the desire to find anything else. Thus the knower of the Self is also one liberated from all bondage, eternally free *(nitya mukta)*.

Mantra 9

tadāhuḥ, yat 'brahmavidyā sarvam bhaviṣyantaḥ' manuṣyā manyante. kimu tadbrahmāvedyasmātatsarvamabhavaditi.

Word Meanings

tat - this; *āhuḥ* - (seekers) say; *brahmavidyā* - through the knowledge of *brahman*; *sarvam* - all, the universe; *bhaviṣyantaḥ* - (we) shall become, shall attain identity with (*itt*- this); *manuṣyāḥ* - people; *yat* - that; *manyante* - think; *tat* - that; *brahma* - *brahman*; *kim* - what; *u* - indeed; *avet* - knew; *yasmāt* - by which; *tat* - it; *sarvam* - all, the universe; *abhavat* - became; *itt*- this

(Some seekers) say, "People think, 'Through the knowledge of *brahman* we shall attain identity with the universe.' Well what did that *brahman* know by which It attained identity with the universe?"

All sentient beings have for their counterparts necessities which can be equated with hunger, pain and sorrow, and obstacles arising out of their ignorance as well as out of the inadequate proficiency they have received from their personal nature, or Nature at large. It is as if a person with intelligence, sensibility, and desire to surmount obstacles is looking helplessly at a seemingly unsurmountable wall of a prison. The world is the prison and

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the living being is the prisoner in it. If one finds a pickaxe, hammer, hatchet or spade, one will surely pick it up and start dismantling the powerful wall that brings despair. If we are not that fortunate, and find that our actions cannot be turned against our misfortune, the next best thing is to use our ability to articulate against it. We may try all kinds of words such as prayer, abuse, cajoling and appeals; we will try to pressurize those around us to join in the fight against the impediments. Before one attains any degree of success with one's words, one has to retire into the secret core of one's own Self with thoughts such as: "Where am I? How did I come to such a helpless chaos? How can I generate a spark of hope? How can I understand the thoughts and inner visions of other people? What values of friendship can I establish with others? How can we work together as comrades in arms and liberate ourselves?" Such being our nature, we come to the conclusion that whatever is to be achieved in this world should begin with thoughts. Only when there is something corresponding to our thoughts in the behavior of other people and the material world in which we are placed can we make a dent in it. Thus the superiority of thought is glorified in our hearts. That is how we set out to achieve our freedom.

We have seen in this *Upaniṣad* that everything began with the first being thinking about a new possibility. With thought and imagination, death was countered with life. Again with thought and imagination, the first model of individual life came into being and *prajāpati* found the most benevolent energy to be the vital force *(prāṇa)*. Using *prāṇa*, thought was transformed into word. Investing words with depth of meaning and tonality of music, the first being came to possess the power of changing the world by envisioning more and more values. It gained insight into the texture of social life and became a law unto itself and a lawgiver to others. Having come so far, it came to know one thing for sure: that it is with thought and imagination that one can transform oneself into the qualities which one's thoughts and imaginations have. The man was like a clod of earth. The woman was like a clod of earth. But the man could see something nonphysical in the woman. Similarly the woman could see a nonphysical entity in the man. He thought of her as his wife. She accepted him as her husband. Out of this came a new possibility of a father and mother for children. The children assumed the status of daughter and son, and established a new relationship

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as brother and sister. When a cluster of these groups began living in several homesteads it became a neighborhood. Several neighborhoods formed a country. Countries relating to other countries formed the world. Thus from nonphysical relationships of ideas, a world of physical relationship was created.

We think of persons as real. Mother is real, father is real, son is real, daughter is real, daughter's children are real, son's children are real, society is real, culture is real, religion is real. There is no end to this world of possibilities. *Bṛhad* means enormous. Individuated persons *(jīvas)* became parts of society *(samaṣṭi)*. The self-founded, self-breathing *ātman* finds its similarity with all the knowing minds in the world and can truly claim itself to be the universal mind or Self. There is no difference between the individual Self and the universal Self. Apart from our physicality and physical achievements, we human beings have grown into a world of enormous purport and dimension - with our thoughts we can reach those who live on the other side of the globe. This possibility of ever-widening consciousness, ever-flourishing language and the ever-growing power of mutuality has become the mind of all, of which the personal mind is only a fragment. It is said that we should be liberated from the confines of the physical so we will not be bound to time, space, body or institution. Then we will have freedom in all its total purport. Such is the concept given in this mantra.

Mantra 10

brahma vā idamagra āsīt, tadātmānamevāvet. aham brahmāsmīti. tasmāttatsarvamabhavat; tadyo yo devānām pratya budhyat sa eva tadabhavat, tatharṣīṇām, tathā manuṣyāṇām; taddhaitatpaśyannṛṣirvāmadevaḥ pratipede, aham manurabhavam sūryaśceti. tadidamapyetarhi ya evam veda, aham brahmāsmīti, sā idam sarvam bhavati, tasya ha na devāścanābhūtyā īśate. ātmā hyeṣām sa bhavati; atha yo'nyām devatāmupāsate, anyo'sāvanyo'hamasmīti, na sa veda, yathā paśurevam sa devānām. yatha ha vai bahavaḥ paśvo manuṣyam bhuñjyuḥ, evamekaikaḥ puruṣo devān bhunakti; ekasmineva paśāvādiyamāne'priyam bhavati, kimu bahuṣu? tasmādeṣām tanna priyam yade-

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tanmanuṣyā viduḥ.

Word Meanings

idam - this (Self perceived in the body); *agre* - at first; *brahma* - *brahman; vai* - verily; *āsīt* - was; *tat* - that; *ātmānam* - itself; *eva* - only; *aham* - I; *brahma* - *brahman; asmi* - am; *iti* - thus; *avet* - knew; *tasmāt* - because of that; *tat* - it; *sarvam* - all; *abhavat* - became; *tat* - regarding this; *devānām* - among the gods; *yaḥ yaḥ* - whosoever; *pratyabudhyata* - realized; *saḥ* - he; *eva* - alone; *tat* - that *(brahman); abhavat* - became; *tathā* - similarly; *ṛṣīṇām* - among the sages; *tathā* - similarly; *manuṣyāṇām* - among people; *etat* - this (self); *tat* - (as) that; *paśyan* - realizing; *ṛṣiḥ* - the sage; *vāmdevaḥ* - Vāmadeva; *prattipede* - knew; *ha* - indeed; *aham* - I; *manuḥ* - Manu; *sūryaḥ* - the sun; *ca* - and; *abhavam* - became *iti; etarhi* - now; *api* - even; *yaḥ* - whoever; *evam* - thus; *tat* - it; *idam* - this; *aham* - I; *brahma* - *brahman; asmi* - am; *iti* - as; *veda* - knows; *saḥ* - one; *idam sarvam* - all this (universe); *bhavati* - becomes; *devāḥ can* - even the gods; *tasya* - one's; *abhūtyai* - to bring about not becoming; *na* - not; *īśate* - are able; *ha* - indeed; *saḥ* - one; *hi* - because; *eṣām* - their; *ātmā* - self; *bhavati* - becomes; *atha* - on the other hand; *yaḥ* - who; *anyām* - another; *devatām* - god; *upāsate* - adores; *asau* - he; *anyaḥ* (is) different (from me); *aham* - I; *anyaḥ* - different (from him); *asmi* - am *iti; saḥ* - one; *na* - not; *veda* - knows; *yathā* - as; *paśuḥ* - an animal (is to people); *evam* - so; *saḥ* - (is) one; *devānām* - to the gods; *yathā ha* - as; *vai* - verily; *bahavaha* - many; *paśavaḥ* - animals; *manuṣyam* - people; *bhuñjyuḥ* - serve; *evam* - so; *ekakaḥ* - each; *puruṣaḥ* - person; *devān* - gods; *bhunakti* - serves; *ekasmin* - a single; *eva* - only; *paśau* - animal; *ādīyamāne* - being taken away; *apriyam*- unpleasantness; *bhavati* - there is; *kimu* - what (to speak); *bahuṣu* - of many; *tasmāt* - therefore; *eṣām* - to them; *tat* - it (is); *na* - not; *priyam* - pleasant; *yat* - therefore; *eṣām* - to them; *tat* - it (is); *na* - not; *priyam* - pleasant; *yat* - that; *manuṣyāḥ* - people *etat* - this (Self); *vidyuḥ* - should know

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This (Self) was verily *brahman* at first. It knew only itself as, "I am *brahman*." Because of that it became all (the universe). And whosoever among the gods realized It became *brahman*. Similarly among the sages, and among people. The sage Vāmadeva, realizing his own Self as That *(brahman)*, knew, "I was Manu and the sun." And even now whoever knows That in a similar way, *i.e.*, "I am *brahman*," becomes this universe. Even the gods are powerless to prevent such a one's becoming the universe, for one becomes their Self. On the other hand, one who adores another god thinking, "He is different from me, and I am different from him," does not know. As is an animal (to people), so is such a one to the gods. As many animals serve a person, so does each person serve the gods. If even one animal is taken away, it causes unpleasantness, what should one say of many animals? Therefore it is not pleasant to the gods that people should realize the Self.

If we sit in the open and look around we can see blades of grass under our feet. Green stretches in all directions and our eyes fall on the panorama made by beautiful trees and distant houses. Around us we have a horizon. The high mountains or the stretch of ocean might form the limits of the horizon. Even beyond the horizon our eyes can wander in the sky where clouds float. If it is day time we can see the sun around which our earth circles. If it is night we can see the shimmering stars which are many light-years away. Such a sight is an extravagance in which our eyes can revel. Powerful telescopes can be an extension of our eyes. And our own powers of imagination are far superior to the best of telescopes. Our imagination can travel not only in the space beyond, but also in the time beyond. As we observe all these, and scan the mysteries of the universe, no past of the universe is alienated from our vision or disconnected with our experience. Where is the end to that? The farther and farther we look or imagine there is still something farther than that.

This continuously spread out world of facts and imagination, however varied and vast, is all part and parcel of the individual's knowledge. Anything which is growing beyond all estimation is called *brahman*. Not even the space that covers the occupation of

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an atom can be comprehended without transforming our knowledge into that. Thus we are seeing only our own knowledge. If what we see is *brahman* then our knowledge is that. Hence the *Upaniṣad* begins by saying that the Self was verily *brahman* at first. It knew only itself as "I am *brahman*" *(aham brahmāsmi iti)*.

This is one of the grand dictums of the *Upaniṣad*. Here "I am" has no egoistic connotation. It only refers to the central focus of the entire universe where consciousness throbs in its orientation. And it says that whosoever among the gods realized it became *brahman*. The god referred to here is none other than our awareness, our consciousness, or what we may call the mind, which is not cluttered with any relativistic notion, but which flows in all directions as the never-ending vastness of space and time and formations that are like the internal details of the grandest picture which has ever been envisaged. It is an Upaniṣadic style to call it a *deva*. The English word 'god' is very inappropriate here because the term *deva* connotes only the agent of illumination or the self-founded awareness which while seeing itself also cognizes whatever constitutes its vision. There is a legendary sage called Vāmadeva who is said to have realized the all-embracing universe as identical with his own Self. *Vāmadeva* indicates the counterpoint of knowledge. If we look at a conductor orchestrating a musical performance with a number of musicians using different musical instruments like the harp, piano, cello, viola, violin, oboe, drum, triangle, saxophone, flutes and horns,we see that the conductor has several counterpoints to relate with. Thus music has a contrapuntal richness which parts into two halves, one within the conductor and the other within the performance that comes from all the participants.

As both these aspects are dialectically of a bipolar nature, one is a converse of the other. They can be called a *vāmadeva*. In fact every sentient being is a *vāmadeva* with some degree of perfection. Vāmadeva is spoken of here as the most ideal model of a counterpoint which is said to have embroidered all of consciousness with the stuff and details of the entire world of appreciation. We should not allow our minds to be dissuaded by the allegoric richness of the illustrative statements of the *Upaniṣads* which goes into a mythologic estimation of a particular sage called Vāmadeva. Vāmadeva is given as an idealized model to guide our meditation on the vastness and specific details of the universe presented to us in its totality.

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Vāmadeva has another allegoric significance. He is said to have seen his identity with Vivasvān, the sun, and Manu, the son of the heavenly orb. We conceive time in relation to the encircling of the earth around the sun which takes one year. Human growth and all occurrences of events are measured in terms of the year, the month, the week, the day, the hour, the minute, and the second. It is in terms of the programmed phases of light that we think of original processes, maturation and even lapses of events. Vāmadeva has a counterpoint in the cause and effect complex; hence it is said that he identified himself both with the law-giver Manu and the sun which are the touchstones of *dharma*. This is not the special privilege of any chosen one; such an experience is open to any person. Even now, if you meditate on the Absolute to the extent of identifying your awareness or knowledge with the totality of the Self, you can also become the Self.

We have an affectivity in every sense organ. Our minds correlate our senses and coordinate our thoughts and feelings. We are assailed with the duality of pain and pleasure. Consequently we are distracted by the pettiness of our senses, and we stumble on every sensation. The possibility of a unitive vision of the total, irrespective of time and space, mood or clime, is a far cry. Because of partial illumination and because the appearance of what has conditioned us partially belongs to the gloomy darkness of negativity, countless millions of people lose the chance to have any identity with something which is generally grand and beautiful. When a person brings such degradation to himself or herself, it makes him or her even less than the psychophysical organism which a human being is. Consequently one becomes less meritorious than the animals one rears. The *Upaniṣad* says that what an animal is to a human being, a human being is to a god. The god is that bright faculty within us which gives commands to our bodily selves. It makes us obliged to carry out commands to make ourselves fit to be social beings or errand runners for the countless millions of stimuli that bombard our bodies and minds from all directions.

An example is given here of a man who possesses a hundred cows being unhappy at the loss of even one cow. Similarly, in the infrastructure of existence in a socially fabricated world, the animal-like person who implicitly obeys the commands of society is appreciated for his defects, his faults, his handicaps and even for his stupidity. A slave master will shower praises on his slave

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who tirelessly labors for him. If a slave becomes wise enough to see the intention of the master and refuses to be exploited, he will be condemned. Similarly, when a wise person is about to establish himself or herself in the world of total understanding, a number of obstacles arise. That person will be subjected to various forms of inadequacy. Such is the world of *samsāra* which abounds in subnormal or abnormal people who are always heading towards misery. Only if we know that such traps are in the world will we be able to go beyond our limitations to become truly wise and have a clear vision of truth.

Mantra 11

brahma vā idamagre āsīdekameva; tadekam sanna vyabhavat. tacchreyorūpamatyasṛjata kṣatram, yānyetāni devatrā kṣatraṇi --indro varuṇaḥ somo rudraḥ parjanyo yamo mṛtyurīśān iti. tasmātkṣatrātparam nāsti; tasmādbrāhmaṇaḥ kṣatriyamadhastādupāste rājasūye, kṣatra eva tadyaśo dadhāti; saiṣa kṣatrasya yoniryadbrahma. tasmādyadyapi rājā paramatām gacchati brahmaiwāntata upaniśrayati svām yonim; ya u enam hinasti svām sa yonimṛcchati,sa pāpīyān bhavati, yathā sreyāmsam himsitvā.

Word Meanings

agre - at first; *idam* - this (*kṣatriya* and other castes); *brahma* - brahman, *virāj* as a *brāhmaṇa; vai* - verily; *āsīt* - was; *ekam* - alone; *eva* - just; *tat* - he; *ekam* - alone; *sat* - being; *na* - not; *vyabhavat* - prospered; *tat* - he; *śreyaḥ* - noble; *rūpam* - a form; *kṣatram* - the *kṣatriya; atyasṛjata* - created; *etāni* - who (are); *yāni* - these; *devatrā* - among the gods; *kṣatraṇi* - *kṣatriyas; --indraḥ* - Indra (the king of the gods); *varuṇaḥ* - Varuṇa (king of the aquatic animals); *somaḥ* - Soma the moon (king of the *brāhmaṇas); rudraḥ* - Rudra (king of the beasts); *parjanyaḥ* - Parjanya (king of lightning etc.); *yamaḥ* - Yama (king of the manes); *mṛtyuḥ* - Death (king of diseases); *īśānaḥ* - (and) Iśāna (king of luminaries); *iti* - namely;

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tasmāt therefore; *kṣatrāt* - to the *kṣatriyas*; *param* - superior; *na* - not; *asti* - there is; *tasmāt* - hence; *rājasūye* - in the *rājasūya* (sacrifice); *brāhmaṇaḥ* - the *brāhmaṇa*; *kṣatriyam* - the *kṣatriya*; *adhastāt* - from below; *upāsate* - adores; *tat* - that; *yaśaḥ* - prestige; *kṣatre* - on the *kṣatriya*; *eva* - alone; *dadhāti* - bestows; *yat* - (that) which; *brahma* - is the *brāhmaṇa*; *kṣatrasya* - of the *kṣatriya*; *sā* -that; *eṣā* - this; *yoniḥ* - (is) source; *tasmāt* - therefore; *yadi api* - although; *rājā* - the king; *paramtām* - pre-eminence; *gacchati* - attains; *antataḥ* - at the end; *svām* - his; *yonim* - source; *brahma* - the *brāhmaṇa*; *eva* - alone; *upaniṣśrayati* - places himself under; *yaḥ u* - who; *enam* - him; *hinasti* - insults; *saḥ* - one; *svām* - own; *yonim* - source; *ṛcchati* - destroys; *saḥ* - one; *pāpīyān* - more vicious; *bhavati* - becomes; *yatha* - as (one does); *śreyāmsam* - (one's) superior; *himsitvā* - by injuring

At first the *kṣatriya* and other castes were verily *brahman*, who was just alone. Being alone, he did not prosper. He created a noble form, the *kṣatriya* -- consisting of those who are *kṣatriyas* among the gods: Indra, Varuṇa, the Moon, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Death, and Iśāna. Therefore there is nothing superior to the *kṣatriya*. Hence, in the *rājasūya* sacrifice, the *brāhmaṇa* adores the *kṣatriya* from a lower seat. He bestows that prestige on the *kṣatriya* alone. It is the *brāhmaṇa* who is the source of the *kṣatriya*. Therefore, although the king attains pre-eminence (in that sacrifice), at the end he places himself under the *brāhmaṇa* alone, who is his source. One who insults the *brāhmaṇa* destroys one's own source. One becomes more vicious (by doing this), as one does by insulting one's superior.

Time and space are conditions of manifestation. If we postulate the state of being before manifestation, we can think of only the unconditioned Absolute. As it has no limit either in time or space the only description given to it is *brahman*. Perhaps we can add to it the word *param* meaning that which transcends all *(parabrahman)*. Some descriptions given to it are "pure existence," "self-luminous light of consciousness," and "that which is never

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altered by any modulation or modification." As the archetypal person is said to have become the first conditioned representation of the unconditioned, *prajāpati* marks the beginning of time and space. The consciousness that fills its being is a pure luminosity of the Self. The Self being identical with the Absolute, we may call *prajāpati* the *brāhmaṇa*. As nothing else existed we can also say all subsequent variations of the archetypal person came from the *brāhmaṇa*. That means the four-fold psychic coloration of persons which were reckoned by Manu did not exist *prima facie*. A speciality of manifestation is that manifestation begins with time. Time is a catalyst of expansion or growth, existence with a certain duration, change or revolution, decay or retardation, and extinction of the form in which the manifestation came into being. Because of corroding time, the variations of the archetypal *brāhmaṇa* do not remain the same. Hence the consideration of the variations that are seen in the subsequent differentiations that came to be established in the fecund replication of embodied beings.

A person can be considered a *brāhmaṇa* only when he or she fulfills the norms of the *brāhmaṇa*. They are:

1. Conscious and unconscious identification with the Supreme Person as already explicated in the previous mantra, I am the Absolute *(aham brahma asmi)*.

2. A *brāhmaṇa* does not think of the body limitation in time and space because such a person is consciously spread out in all directions and realizes that every form consciously assumed is one's own Self. Such being the identification, the *brāhmaṇa* never desires anything whatsoever and does not hold anything or anyone in contempt or as separated from himself or herself. As every seemingly different Self is in a sense one's own, one thinks, speaks and does actions always to please all sentient beings.

3. The only motivation of a *brāhmaṇa* is to bring well being to the entire world and such a one is ever in the act of actualizing the prayer, "May the whole world be happy."

4. A *brāhmaṇa* is never awake to the external world of pleasurable and painful stimuli and never asleep to one's intrinsic nature which is existential, subsistential, and identified with the basis of all values. Such a one is always in the state of natural absorption in the Absolute *(sahaja samādhi)*.

5. The *brāhmaṇa's* transaction in the wakeful world is to transmit the knowledge of Self to fellow beings whose visions are

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filled with ignorance.

6. The dreams of *brāhmaṇas* are identical with the dream of projecting into time and space everything that is auspicious. They utter only that which is benevolent to the listener. Their instructions are such that they bring absolute certitude of truth to the listener. They are always truthful with no touch of pride. They are compassion incarnate. They go from place to place like the spring season bringing the message of joy and beauty to all whom they meet. *Brāhmaṇās* never use other persons as love objects or as instruments to redeem their misery or to do manual services for them. They procreate only when they are in need of bringing forth a benevolent member to enrich the human race. When such a decision is taken, the *brāhmaṇa* couple enter into a discipline of purificatory rituals and offer prayers of resolution to bless the world with a benevolent child. After providing the world with a benevolent son or daughter, the *brāhmaṇa* couple are expected to enter into an appropriate forest retreat to remain the rest of their lives in the all-absorbing vision of the Absolute.

In the course of time, the human species which was born out of *prajāpati* with the dual tendencies of the divine and the demonic became an assorted group that needed a definite set of laws and their affirmation by the instruments of judiciary judgement and corrective measures. Consequently a five-fold alteration came into existence. The cause of the personality variation that became more and more pronounced in the human race was traced to the deviations seen in certain godheads permanently residing in human consciousness, such as Indra, the primordial mind which rules over the senses, memories, moods, and action propensities. Indra is a demiurge characterized by the duality of oscillating between the performed and the performer. There is an aspect of Varuṇa in human beings which is continuously moving like the ocean in which Varuṇa has his domain. The surface of the ocean is never restful; its benevolence and anger are contradictory. The human psyche is very much a representation of the moon's waxing and waning, changing from the light of excitation to the darkness of depression. The Rudra in humans makes them alternatively destructive and compassionate. Parjanya is like a rain cloud that can be benevolent or can cause terrible havoc. Yama, the god of restraint, can remain indolent and then assault with a fury. Death is like a shadow of the soul. There is also Iśāna the reckoner of good and bad deeds. Iśāna guides a

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person's causal consciousness to his or her next birth according to one's tendencies. Those who have these prominent traits are transformed into the *kṣatriyas*.

Although these gods do not have the sublime visions of the *brāhmaṇa* they can express powers of affirmative values. Hence they are the promising complement to the *brāhmaṇa* as the manifestation of the psychic qualities in the human race. Human beings are subjected to the altering states of wakeful consciousness, dream consciousness, deep-sleep state, and the state of spiritual absorption. In wakeful consciousness a person comes into various encounters of attraction and repulsion, exposure to words of praise and contemptuous reproaches. Social obligations bring various compulsions to exert physically or mentally. Emotional frustration may cause a person to have the strain of desiring companionship or the painful situations of annoyance, revenge, or nervous breakdown. Females face untold situations of inconvenience and embarrassment because of their physical conditions of pregnancy or menstruation. Their sheer good looks and charms can cause the dangerous situation of an antisocial character wanting to molest them.

The dream state of a person has several degrees of subjectivity which can confine the individual to intensive states of distraction, restlessness, depressive thoughts, nightmares, hallucinations, and all types of phobias, complexes, syndromes, psychoses, neuroses, and manias. To regularize the life of a person in a normal society, various measures are to be adopted with a number of therapeutic and social adjustments of behavioral discipline.

Deep sleep is a comparatively benevolent state of inner rest. If it comes as a pathological case of a deep coma, the soul withdraws into the deep unconscious. That can cut off the vital forces and the mechanisms of recall. These and many other peculiarities of altering states of consciousness need immediate and effective social attention.

To look into all the anomalies that bring various forms of distress to people physically, hygienically, socially and morally, it was necessary to have a strong person to be vigilant, alert, and with local concentration on the problems of the immediate neighborhood. Of course that type of person cannot have the all-penetrating mind of a *brāhmaṇa*, but such a one can be lawful and maintain law with honesty, a high sense of social belongingness and a sense of meticulous perfection. This assignment was

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delegated to the *kṣatriya*, kings and their lieutenants. Thus came the reference to setting up a responsible government, headed by a king who gains consent of subjects by performing a *rājasūya*.

The wise person *(brāhmaṇa)*, who has universal sympathy and whose consciousness is in resonance with the Absolute, is complementary to the *kṣatriya*. The *kṣatriya* ruler is the secular head of state and the wise *brāhmaṇa* gives counselling and moral approval for the law-enforcement of the king and his executives. In a society not corrupted by avarice, pride, power craziness and favoritism, this can be a democratically conceivable, virtuous form of government. The *brāhmaṇa* is the source of all. So even the king, in spite of his secular supremacy, respects the *brāhmaṇa* as a representative of the Absolute. The *brāhmaṇa* leads the way to *mokṣa* and the king regularizes *samsāra*.

Mantra 12

sa naiva vyabhavat, sa viśamasṛjata, yānyetāni devajātāni gaṇaśa ākhyāyante--vasvo rudrā ādityā visvedevā marut iti

Word Meanings

saḥ - he (*virāj*); *na* - not; *eva* - still; *vyabhavat* - prospered; *saḥ* - he; *viśam* - *vaiśya; asṛjata* - created; *etāni* - these; *devajātāni* - classes of gods; *yāni* - who; *gaṇaśaḥ* - in groups; *ākhyāyante* - are described--; *vasavaḥ* - the (eight) Vasus; *rudrāḥ* - the (eleven) Rudras; *ādityāḥ* - the (twelve) Ādityas; *viśvedevāḥ* - the (thirteen) Viśvadevas; *marutaḥ* - (and) the (forty-nine) Maruts; *iti* - namely

He did not prosper still. He created the *vaiśyas*, those classes of gods that are described in groups: the Vasus, the Rudras, the Ādityas, the Viśvadevas, and the Maruts.

The *kṣatriya* is physically stronger than the *brāhmaṇa*, mentally more concerned with the transactional world and certainly very efficient to enforce laws in the community. However, the

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brāhmaṇa is spiritually a superior person in wisdom, insight, catholicity, generous disposition, restraint, sense of forbearance, and spiritual care and concern for all sentient beings. These are all excellent qualities to make a person worthy of being adored. What the *prajāpati* aspired for was to make the world order perfect in every way and all its systems efficient for the advancement of a holistic growth.

When the *prajāpati* found that the *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* alone could not fulfill the scheme of the world order, he found it necessary for the community to be more broad based with brisk transactions going on between members of the neighborhood. So he caused the promotion of a set of people who are naturally pragmatic in their outlook and have a social bent of mind. They were *vaiśyas*, the trading and agricultural community whose main activity was the distribution of consumer amenities. They were more flexible than the *kṣatriyas* and their interpersonal relationships were mainly based on pleasant transactions. They were willing to support everybody's social needs by giving generous gifts. There came better cohesion between the members of the community but the world order was still not sufficiently promising.

Mantra 13

sa naiva vyabhavat, sa śaudram varṇamasṛjata pūṣaṇam; iyam vai pūṣā, iyam hidam sarvam puṣyati yadidam kiñca.

Word Meanings

sa - he; *na* - not; *eva* - still; *vyabhavat* - prospered; *saḥ* - he; *śaudram* - the *śūdra; varṇam* - caste; *pūṣaṇam* - *pūṣan; asṛjata* - created; *iyam* - this (earth); *vai* - verily; *pūṣā* - (is) *pūṣan; iyam* - this (earth); *hi* - because; *yat kim ca* - whichever; *idam* - (is) here; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *puṣyati* - nourishes

He did not prosper still. He created the *śūdra* caste, viz., *pūṣan*. This earth indeed is *pūṣan;* for it nourishes all

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this that exists.

The *prajāpati* found that what was lacking in the community was large scale programmers of production and labor resources. The first three classes belonged to hypostatic realms. He caused the real sons and daughters of earth to manifest. They became the providers for all needs, whose actions could be directly witnessed by the nourisher of the world, the sun. The entire human community depended on the *śūdras* for the sustenance of life. This working class changed the barren earth and waters into the promised land of plenty.

Mantra 14

sa naiva vyabhavat. tacchreyorūpamatyasṛjata dharmam; tadetat kṣatrasya kṣatram yaddharmaḥ; tasmāddharmātparam nāsti; atho abalīyān balīyāṁsamāśamsate dharmeṇa; yathā rājñaivam; yo vai sa dharmaḥ satyam vai tat, tasmāt satyam vadantamāhuḥ, dharmam vadatīti, dharmam vā vadantam satyam vadatīti, etaddhyevaitadubhayam bhavati.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *na* - not; *eva* - still; *vyabhavat* - prospered; *tat* - that; *śreyaḥ* - noble; *rūpam* - a form; *dharmam* - righteousness; *atyasṛjata* - created; *yat* - (that) which; *dharmaḥ* - is righteousness; *tat* - that; *etat* - this; *kṣatrasya* - of the *kṣatriya; kṣatram* - (is) the *kṣatriya* or ruler; *tasmāt* - therefore; *dharmāt* - than righteousness; *param* - (anything) greater; *nā* - not; *asti* - there is; *atho* - so; *abalīyān* - a weak person; *balīyāmsam* - one who is stronger; *dharmeṇa* - through righteousness; *āśamsate* - wishes (to defeat); *yathā* - as; *rājña* - through the king; *evam* - similarly; *yaḥ vai* - which (is); *saḥ* - that; *dharmaḥ* - righteousness; *tat* - that; *vai* - verily; *satyam* - (is) truth; *tasmāt* - hence; *satyam* - the truth; *vadantam* - of one speaking; *āhuḥ* - (people) say; *dharmam* - what is righteous; *va* - or; *vadantam* - of one speaking; *satyam* -

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what is true; *vadati* - (he) speaks *iti*; *etat* - this; *abhayam* - couple; *hi* - because; *etat* - this (righteousness); *eva* - only; *bhavati* - is

He did not prosper still. He created a noble form, righteousness. It is righteousness which is the ruler of (even) *kṣatriyas*. Therefore there is nothing greater than righteousness. So even a weak person wishes (to defeat) one who is stronger through righteousness, as one does through the king. What is righteousness is indeed truth. Hence people say of one speaking what is true, that he speaks what is righteous, or of one speaking what is righteous, that he speaks what is true, because both of them are but righteousness.

The production of consumer goods and the equiping of all with the riches that come out of the labor of world order did not achieve the hallmark of success. *Prajāpati* found the world still lacking something essential. So he created a noble form, righteousness. "Righteousness" can be one possible meaning of *dharma*. The root "*dhar*" means that which sustains. Whether a person is wise or chivalrous, generous or productive, it is a quality in the person that sustains one's integral character and mode of behavior. That sustaining principle is *dharma*. Socially, *dharma* is the virtue of righteousness. Spiritually it is the basic scheme of life out of which a particular mode is fashioned. In that sense it can be compared to the genes which determine the kind of person which is to be unfolded through the individuation of that particular life form. It is somewhat like the basic physical property of water or fire without which that element cannot be brought forth. *Dharma* holds within it a program or calendar, so to say, of evolutionary expansion like a seed which contains the epitomization of all aspects of the growth which will unfold in the course of time. *Dharma* is also a dynamic power which furthers the growth from one stage to another. It is as if *dharma* is the soul force of any living entity. Hence it is instinctively connected with the *karma* or action performance of every individuated being.

What is going into individuation also has a class nature as a collective catalyst which affects a number of people or members

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belonging to the same species. *Dharma* is the sharing of a group attitude or group behavior by several individual members held together by *karma*. Unlike *karma*, in which the quantitative aspect of the work force generated in an action situation is relevant, *dharma* is suggestive of the qualitative norm of an action which can square with a certain ideal. What is called *svadharma* has in it a scheme to actualize a mode of life which is appreciated in terms of its intrinsic worth whether it is that of a strong person or a weak person. Emmanual Kant, in his *Principles of Ethics*, says that what matters in the performance of an action is the good intention that prompts a person to act. If, by the niggardly provision of a step-motherly like nature the intention is not carried out well, it is still to be appreciated. Hence we read in the *Bhagavad Gīta* that doing one's own *dharma* even if it is inferior is better than carrying out another's *dharma* in an excellent manner. Two main ingredients in the performance of *svadharma* make *dharma* morally supreme: truth and righteousness.

Mantra 15

tadetadbrahma kṣatram viṭ śūdraḥ; tadagninaiva deveṣu brahmābhavat; brāhmaṇo manuṣyeṣu, kṣatriyeṇa kṣatriyo, vaiśyena vaiśyaḥ, śūdreṇa śūdraḥ; tasmādagnāveva deveṣu lokamicchante, brāhmaṇe manuṣyeṣu, etābhyām hi rūpābhyām brahmābhavat. atha yo ha vā asmāllokātsvam lokamadṛṣṭvā praiti, sa enamvidito na bhunakti, yathā vedo vānnūkttaḥ; anyadvā karmākṛtam; yadiha vā apyanevamvinmahatpuṇyam karma karoti, taddhāsyāntatah kṣiyata evaḥ; ātmānameva lokamupāsīta; sa ya ātmānameva lokamupāsate, na hāsya karma kṣiyate. asmāddhyevātmano yadyatkāmayate tattatsṛjate

Word Meanings

tat - that; *etat* - this (four-fold caste was created); *brahma* -the *brāhmaṇa; kṣatram* - the *kṣatriya; viṭ* - the *vaiśya; śūdraḥ* - (and) the *śūdra; tat* - that *(virāj); deveṣu* - among the gods; *agninā* - as fire; *eva* - only; *brahma* -

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brāhmaṇa; abhavat - became; *manuṣyeṣu* - among people; *brāhmaṇaḥ* - as the *brāhmaṇa; kṣatriyeṇa* - through the (divine) *kṣatriya; kṣatriyaḥ* - a *kṣatriya; vaiśyena* - through the (divine) *vaiśya; vaiṣyaḥ* - a *vaiṣya; śūdreṇa* - through the (divine) *śūdra; śūdraḥ* - a *śūdra; tasmāt* - therefore; *deveśu* - among the gods; *agnau* - through fire (by performing rites); *eva* - only; *lokam* - objective; *ic-chante* - (people) wish to attain; *manuṣyeṣu* - (and) among people; *brāhmaṇe* - as the *brāhmaṇa; brahma - virāj; hi* - because; *etābhyām rūpābhyām* - of these two forms; *abhavat* - became; *atha* - but; *yaḥ ha vai* - whoever; *svam* - their own; *lokam* - objective (the Self); *adṛṣṭvā* - not realizing; *asmāt lokāt* - from this world; *praiti* - goes out; *saḥ* - it; *avidितaḥ* - being unknown; *enam* - him; *na* - not; *bhunakti* - protects; *yathā* - as; *vā* - either; *annūktaḥ* - unread; *vedaḥ* - the *Vedas; anyat* - any other (secular); *vā* - or; *akṛtam* - not performed; *karma* - work (do not help); *anevamvit* - one not knowing thus; *tha* - in the world; *yadi vai* - if; *mahat* - plentiful; *puṇyam* - meritorious; *karma* - work; *api* - even; *karoti* - does; *asya* - one's; *tat ha* - that; *antataḥ* - at the end; *kṣīyate* - is exhausted; *eva* - undoubtedly; *ātmānam* - the Self; *eva* - only; *lokam* - upon the objective; *upāsīt* - (one) should meditate; *saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *ātmānam* - the Self; *eva* - only; *lokam* - upon the objective; *upāsate* - meditates; *asya* - one's; *karma* - work; *na ha* - never; *kṣīyate* - is exhausted; *yat yat* - whatever; *hi* - for; *kāmayate* - is desired; *tat tat* - that; *asmāt* - from this; *ātmanaḥ* - Self; *eva* - alone; *sṛjate* - (one creates)

(Thus) this (four-fold caste was created): the *brāmaṇa*, the *kṣatriya*, the *vaiśya* and the *śūdra*. *Virāj* became a *brāhmaṇa* among the gods only as fire, and among people as the *brāhmaṇa*; (he became) a *kṣatriya* (among people) through the (divine) *kṣatriyas*, a *vaiśya* through the (divine) *vaiśyas* and a *śūdra* through the (divine) *śūdras*. Therefore people wish to attain their objective among the gods only through fire, and among people through (birth as) a *brāhmaṇa*, since *virāj* assumed these two forms. But if any one goes out of this world without realizing the

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objective of their own Self, the latter, being unknown, does not protect them, just as the *Vedas* unread, or any other work not performed (do not help). Even if a person who lacks such knowledge does plenty of meritorious work in the world, that work is undoubtedly exhausted at the end. One should (therefore) meditate only upon the objective that is the Self. The work of one who meditates only upon the objective of the Self is never exhausted. For such a one creates whatever is desired from this very Self.

Thus four psychological types came into being and, as an overall fifth quality, righteousness became the riveting integrity of each type's ingrained *dharma*. Universality of the pervading Self is venerated as the all-witnessing fire among the shining ones and the same was identified as the *brāhmaṇa* whose mind is in at-one-ment with the universal Self. Whoever became identified in principle with the *kṣatriya* type developed the characteristics of a *kṣatriya*. Those who became identified with *vaiśya* characteristics became explicit in their life as *vaiśyas*. Those who held fast to their productive prowess became the *śūdras* in practice.

Whatever the special psychological type in one's mode of behavior, everyone has to conform to the rationale of a person whose Self is at one with the Absolute by maintaining the fire of sacrament and by recognizing that all individuation has for its basis the primordial *brāhmaṇa* quality of the species as a whole. Otherwise such a soul will become alienated from its roots. The solidarity of all human beings irrespective of their individuated psychological types should *prima facie* be true due to the common divine source of all. All persons should recognize in their reasoning faculty the fire of wisdom shared by all members of the species. If one alienates oneself from one's basic identity with one's divine origin, one's actions, however meritorious, will go unrecognized. So it is imperative that every person should meditate on the Universal Self. Without alienating oneself from one's unity with the Supreme Self one should carry out one's assignments.

The ear, the eye, and the faculty of speech apparently carry out different activities. But they are always in the service of the same mind and they are forever illuminated by the light of the same Self. Similarly, all psychological types are basically in attunement with *brāhmaṇa*-hood and the fire of reason which all

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homo sapiens share. With this perspective, nobody is estranged from carrying out his or her life's mission nor prevented from seeking any goal of life.

Mantra 16

atho ayam vā ātmā sarveṣām bhūtānām lokaḥ; sa yajjuhoti, yadyajate, ten devānām lokaḥ; atha yadanubrūte tena ṛṣīṇām; atha yatpitṛbhyo nipṛāṇāti, yatprajāmicchate tena pitṛṇām; atha yanmanuṣyānvāsayate, yadebyo'śanam dadāti, tena manuṣyāṇām; atha yatpaśubhyastṛṇodakam vindati, tena paśūnām; yadasya gṛheṣu śvāpadā vayāmsyā pipīlikābhya upajīvanti, tena teṣām lokaḥ; yathā ha vai svāya lokāyāriṣṭimicchet, evam haivamvide sarvāṇi bhūtānyariṣṭimicchanti; tadvā etad viditam mīmāmsitam.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - self (the householder); *vai* - verily; *sarveṣām bhūtānām* - of all beings; *lokaḥ* - is the support; *saḥ* - one; *yat* - that; *juhoti* - offers libations (in the fire); *yat* - that; *yajate* - one sacrifices; *tena* - by that; *devānām* - of the gods; *lokaḥ* - the support; *atha* - now; *yat* - that; *anubrūte* - (one) repeats, recites (the Vedas); *tena* - by that; *ṛṣīṇām* - (the support) of the sages; *atha* - then; *yat* - that; *pitṛbhyaḥ* - to the manes; *nipṛṇāti* - (one) makes offerings; *yat* - (and) that; *prajām* - offspring; *icchate* - desires, obtains; *tena* - by that; *pitṛṇām* - (the support) of the *manes*; *atha* - then; *yat* - that; *manuṣyān* - humans; *vāsyate* (one) lodges; *yat* - (and) that; *ebhyaḥ* - to them; *aśanam* - food; *dadāti* - (one) gives; *tena* - by that; *manuṣyāṇām* - (the support) of humans; *atha* - then; *yat* - that; *paśubhyaḥ* - for animals; *tṛṇodakam* - fodder and water; *vindati* - (one) provides; *tena* - by that; *paśunām* - (the support) of animals; *yat* - that; *asya gṛheṣu* - in one's houses; *śvāpadaḥ* - beasts; *vayāṁsi* - birds; *ā pipīlikābhyaḥ* - (and) even ants; *upajīvanti* - feed; *tena* - by that; *teṣām* - their; *lokaḥ* -

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support; *yathā ha* - just as; *vai* - verily; *svāya lokāya* - to one's own body; *arisṭim* - welfare; *icchet* - (one) wishes; *evam ha* - so; *sarvāṇi* - all; *bhūtani* - beings; *evamvide* - to one who knows thus; *arisṭim* - welfare; *icchanti* - wish; *tat* - that; *etat* - this; *vai* - indeed; *viditam* - known; *mīmāmsitam* - (and) discussed

Now this self (the householder) is verily the support of all beings. It is by offering libations in the fire and performing sacrifices that one becomes a support to the gods. By reciting the *Vedas* one acts as a support to the sages. By making offerings to the *manes* and desiring offspring one is a support of the *manes*. By lodging humans and giving food to them one becomes a support of humans. By providing fodder and water for animals one becomes their support. And as beasts and birds and even ants feed in one's house, one is thereby their support. Just as one wishes welfare to one's body, so do all beings wish welfare to one who knows thus. All this (fivefold duty) has verily been known, and discussed.

After a general description of the manifestation of the living species and the procreative expansion of various species, the four main psychological types, the *brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra* and the common source of their righteousness *(dharma)* has been described. Now the greatest institution, a homestead, is introduced. Instead of thinking of a person as an individual, he or she is here placed in a family. This mantra presents the manifold duties of the householder. The archetypal value source (*dharma)* is described in this mantra as the immediate cause of a number of dutiful behavior patterns. Hitherto both the shining ones *(devas)* and the dark ones *(asuras)* were spoken of only as psychic factors. Now they are extrapolated. Instead of treating the sense organs and the mind as manifestations of this or that demiurge, an individual psychic existence is attributed to these urges as a host of hypostatic entities. An ethereal world is conceived of as if it is a superior world to that of human existence. It is called the *deva loka*, or region of the gods. Similarly, those who have died and physically become extinct are also retained as psychic forbears in a world of *manes*. Then a gradation is marked

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in the worlds of existence, such as the world of human physical existence *(martya loka)*, a meta-world of the heavens *(deva loka)* and an infra-world of parapsychologic depth called the *pitṛloka*. Human beings are central as caretakers of both the world above and the world below. The human world is conceived of as a world of coexistence with neighbors, atmospheric forces, and various life forms belonging to the sky, earth, and water. Humans are placed in this multifariously organized world as caretakers of all other inhabitants of the three worlds.

Such a scheme prompts us to think of different gradations of truth between ontological physical entities and the world of transcendence. In between these two grades of existence there can be various levels of freedom and control of the functioning of those who can be visibly and tangibly encountered and those who belong to the world of apparitions and dreams. The infra-world of negative conditions is also filled with various kinds of psychic entities with which the unconscious and semiconscious mind comes into interaction and encounter. The simple world with which the *Upaniṣad* began has now become a multi-layered world. The ontological truth we experience in our wakeful hours within the framework of time, space and mass, and biologic and physiochemical operation of the dynamic of energy, is only a small area of the extensive dimensions of the mind or psyche of the human being.

In all religions we can see this kind of complicated elaboration by certain imaginative writers who try to present existence in a very dramatic manner such as in the *YogaVasiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmiki, *The Divine Comedy* of Dante, and *The Interior Castle* of St. Teresa of Avalon. As a parallel to these theologic conceptualizations of the mysterious world of the psyche, many story writers have also described their fascinating concepts of a fairy world or adventurous worlds of heroes such as the Greek legends of the gods, the labors of Hercules, the hundred and one Arabian nights, the stories of Chinese myths and mysteries, and the Danish saga of the Eddas. There are a number of such traditions all over the world belonging to the Sumerian, Germanic, Slavic, Byzantine, Egyptian, and the North and South American worlds of imagination developed by indigenous groups such as the Mayans and the Incas. When we compare these to the psychic world which is being introduced in this mantra, it is comparatively more organized and simpler to understand.

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The main point to remember as we proceed is the relationship between *brahma*, *dharma*, and *karma*. *Brahma* is the immediate ground of all propensities of action. *Dharma* is a unified source of several variants of action *(karma)*. The unity of *dharma* is rooted in the homogeneity of everything implied in the universality of both the manifested and the unmanifested. The distinction between the manifested and unmanifested is one of cause and effect and what transcends both is the pure aspect of the Absolute which is beyond cause and effect.

In the present mantra people grow into the position of power and possession. The power is vested in the man as father and husband and in the woman as wife and mother. They share a common duty. They become *dharmacārins*, the co-performers of duty. All four classes of people mentioned before need to be in close relationship with the householders to provide fertile land to be cultivated and maintain farms with livestock and the production of rice, wheat, corn and other edibles. This responsibility mainly rests with the nourishers, *śūdras* (*pūṣan*). There should be the active cooperation of the *vaiśyas* for buying and selling the products of the householders' farms. Their life-style, wealth and respected position in society are honored and maintained by custodians of law and its enforcement, the *kṣatriyas*. Above all, the householders' spirits are each day brought into at-one-ment with the Absolute through the rites of burnt sacrifice. The fragrance of the sacrifice which rises into the atmosphere with the flames of the fire is believed to be the obligatory offering of gratitude to the gods. The sharing of the offerings with fellow humans maintains a good-neighborly relationship which is of an ontologic order. Their maintenance of the woods, groves, orchards, and gardens with appropriate lakes, rivers and wells make them protectors of their environment. During the burnt sacrifice they recite the psalms and songs of the *Vedas* and listen to the words of wisdom given by their preceptors. It is customary for the householder to give alms and gifts to the learned and those who are too weak to meet their own needs. They give rice and corn to the birds of the sky and to animals and birds kept as their domestic pets. Insects also get their share of food and other nourishing materials such as honey, sugar and ghee. They care for animals such as cows, goats, dogs, cats, etc., with tenderness. The dead and departed souls are remembered in gratitude and symbolic gestures are made as a mark of their respect to the departed. Thus

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householders are elaborate performers of duties, *dharma*. Such is the presentation of family life given in this mantra.

Mantra 17

atmaivedamagra āsideka eva; so'akāmayata -- jāyā me syāt, atha prajāyeya; atha vittam me syāt, atha karma kurvīyeti; etāvān vai kāmaḥ; neccham̐scanāto bhūyo vindet; tasmādapyetarhyekāki kāmayate -- jāyā me syāt, atha prajāyeya; atha vittam me syāt, atha karma kurvīyeti; sa yāvadapyeteṣāmekaikam na prāpnoti, akṛtsna eva tāvanmanyate; tasyo kṛtsnatā -- mana evāsyātmā, vāgjāyā, prāṇaḥ prajā, cakṣurmānuṣam vittam, cakṣuṣā hi tadvindate śrotram daivam; śroteṇa hi tacchṛṇoti; atmaivāsya karma, ātmana hi karma karoti; sa esa pāṅkto yajñaḥ pāṅktaḥ paśuḥ, pāṅktaḥ puruśaḥ, pāṅktamidam sarvam yadidam kiñca; tadidam sarvamāpnoti ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

idam - this (variety of covetable objects); *agre* - in the beginning; *ātmā* - the self (the unenlightened bachelor); *eva* - only; *āsīt* - was; *ekaḥ* - single; *eva* - just; *saḥ* - he; *akāmayata* - desired; *me* - to me; *jāyā* - a wife; *syāt* - let there be; *atha* - so that; *prajāyeya* - (I) may be born (as the child); *atha* - and; *me* - to me; *vittam* - wealth; *syāt* - let there be; *atha* - so that; *karma* - rites; *kurvīya* - (I) may perform *iti*; *kāmaḥ* - desire; *etāvān* - (is) this much; *vai* - verily; *icchan* - wishing; *can* - even; *ataḥ* - than this; *bhūyaḥ* - more; *na* - not; *vindet* - (one) can attain; *tasmāt* - therefore; *etarhi* - now; *api* - even; *ekākī* - (being) single; *kāmayate* - (one) desires; *me jāyā syāt, atha prajāyeya; atha me vittam syāt, atha karma kurvīya iti* - (as above); *saḥ* - he; *yāvat* - as long; *eteṣām* - of these; *ekaikam* - each; *api* - even; *na* - not; *prāpnoti* - gets; *tāvat* so long; *akṛtsnaḥ* - (he is) incomplete; *eva* - only; *manyate* - he thinks; *tasya* - his; *kṛtsnatā* - completeness; *u* - too (takes place in this way); *manaḥ* - the mind; *eva* - itself (is);

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asya - his; *ātmā* - self; *vāk* - speech; *jāyā* - wife; *prāṇaḥ* - vital force; *prajā* - progeny; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye; *mānuṣam* - human; *vittam* - wealth; *cakṣuṣā* - by the eye; *hi* - since; *tat* - it; *vindate* - (he) obtains; *śrotram* - the ear; *daivam* - (is) divine (wealth); *śrotreṇa* - by the ear; *hi* - since; *tat* - it; *śruṇoti* - (he) hears of; *ātmā* - the body; *eva* - itself; *asya* - his; *karma* - rite; *ātmanā* - through the body; *hi* - since; *karma* - rite; *karoti* - performs; *saḥ* - that; *eṣaḥ* - this; *pāṅktaḥ* - having five factors; *yajñaḥ* - (is) sacrifice; *paśuḥ* - an animal; *pāṅktaḥ* - (has) five factors; *puruṣaḥ* - person; *pāṅktaḥ* - (has) five factors; *yat kiñca idam* - whatever there is; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *pāṅktam* - (has) five factors; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *tat* - that; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *āpnoti* - (one) attains

In the beginning this (variety of covetable objects) was but the self -- just a single entity. He desired, "Let me have a wife, so that I may be born (as a child), and let me have wealth, so that I may perform rites." Desire verily comprises this much. One cannot attain more than this even if one wishes. Therefore even now a man, being single, desires, "Let me have a wife, so that I may be born, and let me have wealth, so that I may perform rites." So long as he does not get each of these, he thinks he is but incomplete. His incompleteness (may take place in this way) too: The mind verily is his self, speech his wife, the vital force his progeny, the eye his human wealth -- since he attains it with the help of the eye, the ear his divine wealth -- since he hears it through the ear, and the body itself his rite, since he performs rites through the body. (So) this is a (mental) sacrifice consisting of five factors. For an animal has five factors, a person has five factors, and whatever exists consists of five factors. One who knows thus attains all this.

Hitherto the *Upaniṣad* presented a number of processes in which tangible and objective elements of manifestation evolved and gained aspects which are subjectively and spiritually significant. In the present mantra the development is from spirit to psychosomatic elaborations. Like a stir in the calm waters of a

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deep lake transforming its surface appearance with several concentric ripples, the singleness of the primordial spirit is changed into an elaborate design of relativistic factors. Such is the process introjected here into a primordial spirit. In Semitic religions the concept of such a spirit comes prior to the manifestation of the world. In the *Upaniṣad* several elaborations of the world order have already been presented without recourse to a spirit. A series of worlds with graded objectivity were projected. Then it proceeded beyond the subjective to transcendence. Now the focus is on the spirit, mentioned here as *ātmā*. Śankara, for some reason, wants to qualify the self as the preconscious of an unenlightened bachelor. Probably the ancient philosopher wants us to know that the self referred to here is not the Supreme Self identified with *brahman*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* the term *ātmā* is used in a fairly loose and undefined manner so that it can be anything between the soul and the body. In the present case it means an imaginative mind. To make it easier to understand the meaning of the present mantra we can think of this *ātmā* as a person who is alone. He desires to have a wife, not merely for companionship and conjugal pleasure, but also to have a child born of her. He desires a child so that he can have a legitimate reason to acquire wealth. Only if he has wealth can he perform rituals. Thus his desire is to elaborate his self and its interest into a whole situation that would be the same as that of a householder. So far the *Upaniṣad* has not clearly demarcated the four specific periods of an individual's span of life on earth.

In the previous verse four psychological types were presented. In the Indian mind the four classes are complemented with four disciplines of life: 1) student *(brahmacārī)*, 2) householder *(gṛhastha)*, 3) recluse retired from active life into a forest hermitage *(vānaprastha)*, and 4) fully renounced person *(sannyāsī)*. These lifestyles are called *āśramas*. In this mantra we are given the slow transition of ideas into resolves of action and actions being materialized on the objective plane. A *brahmacārī* is one who is very much bent on meditating on the unity of all beings in the transcendence of the Absolute. He or she is not prone to indulge in any activity at all. That pure state of mind which contemplates on the Self as the Supreme or the world as an objectification changes radically when a person's mind is infested with erotic designs. On becoming erotic one's libidinal interest is stirred into subliminal actions. The idea of a woman as a companion

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first comes to a man only as the entertaining of a pleasurable imagination. Afterwards it becomes a strong incentive to look for a woman who can be all his own. The acquisition of a wife or a husband is the actualization of the householder's life. The worlds spoken of before as the *devaloka*, where the gods are to be propitiated; and the *pitṛloka*, where the *manes* are to be gratified with rituals, are worlds which are equally real to a householder. Along with this, a number of obligatory duties are accepted which are to be actually performed in the external world with all the ritualistic elaborations detailed in the *Brahma Sūtrās*. A person who has a hierarchy of worlds appended to the ontologic world has also to cultivate faith in many theologic beliefs.

Desires entail a specification of designs to be actualized. The laws of nature are also to be looked into. One can fulfill only certain desires such as having a wife or a husband, a home, children, landed properties, employees, and acquisitions of money, jewelry and domestic animals like cattle. What can be desired and actualized has a physical limit. When a person desires reasonable acquisitions and does not get them there is dissatisfaction in his or her mind. Life feels incomplete. The *Upaniṣad* finds this a convenient context to wean a wise person away from gross desires by converting his or her desires into symbols of contemplation. Hence the *Upaniṣad* says one's completeness can as well be conceived of by thinking of one's mind as one's self, speech as one's mate, vital force as one's progeny, the eye as one's human wealth, and the ear as one's divine wealth. What one can physically see with one's eye can also be dreamt and seen with one's mind's eye. The experiencing of a visual image in the dream, however fascinating at the time, does not hold the person in bondage after he or she wakes up from the dream. Hence, imagining a vista of beauty for meditative purposes does not have the binding nature of physical acquisition. Active imagination happens when we talk. A lot of talk leading to the execution of things happens when one discusses one's plans with one's spouse. A person comes to know of all the great goals one can achieve by listening to the words of an enlightened master. On hearing of concepts like liberation (*mokṣa*) or the vision of the Self (*ātmā darśana*), the listener may not functionally comprehend what exactly is said by the preceptor. In such cases a formal projection capable of being conceived by the listener is held in the mind as a futuristic spiritual objective to be experienced. This is

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called *śabda ākāra vṛtti*. In the course of time a wrong concept can be slowly modified and corrected through intense meditation until a final intuition of perfect vision comes to the student. It is for that reason that what is heard by the ear is spoken of as divine wealth. As the body of a person is instrumental to perform all actions, the body itself is looked upon as the symbol of ritualistic action *(karma)*. The Self, speech or the word, vital breath, worldly wealth and divine wealth are considered to be the five factors of a sacrifice one performs mentally instead of living the actual obligatory life of a householder. Having this five-fold equipment is natural for any being that performs. It is with this mention of an alternative to ritualistic action that the fourth *brāhmaṇa* comes to a close.

Brāhmaṇa 5

Mantra 1

yatsaptānnāni medhayā tapasājanayatpitā. ekamasya sādhāraṇam dve devānabhājayat. trīṇyātmane'kuruta paśubhya ekam prāyacchat. tasminsarvam pratiṣṭhitam yacca prāṇiti yacca na. kasmāttāni na kṣīyante-'dyamānāni sarvadā. yo vaitāmakṣitim veda so'nnamatti pratīkena. sa devānapigacchati sa ūrjamupajīvati. iti ślokaḥ.

Word Meanings

pitā - the father; *yat* - that; *medhayā* - through meditation; *tapasā* - (and) through rites; *sapta* - seven; *annāni* - (kinds of) food; *ajanayat* - created (is being set forth); *ekam* - one; *asya* - of this (world); *sādhāraṇam* - (is) general; *dve* - two; *devān* - to the gods; *abhājayat* - (he) assigned; *trīṇi* three; *ātmane* - for himself; *akuruta* - (he) fixed; *ekam* - one; *paśubhyaḥ* - to animals; *prāyacchat* - (he) gave; *yat ca* - whatever; *prāṇiti* - lives; *yat* - whatever; *ca* - and; *na* - not; *sarvam* - all; *tasmin* - on it (the last);

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pratiṣṭhitam - rests; *sarvadā* - constantly; *adyamānāni* - being consumed; *tāni* - they; *kasmāt* - why; *na* - not; *kṣīyante* - are exhausted; *yaḥ vai* - whoever; *tām* - that; *akṣitim* - (the cause of) inexhaustibility; *veda* - knows; *saḥ* - one; *pratīkena* - prominently; *annam* - food; *atti* - eats; *saḥ* - one; *devān* - with the gods; *apigacchati* - attains identity; *saḥ* - one; *ūrjam* - nectar; *upajīvati* - lives on; *itī* - these; *ślokaḥ* - (are) the mantra verses

That the father created seven kinds of food through meditation and rites (is being set forth): one was the general food of all beings; two he assigned to the gods; three he fixed for himself; and one he gave to animals. Whatever lives and whatever does not all rest on this (last). Why are the foods not exhausted, though they are constantly being consumed? Whoever knows (the cause of) this inexhaustibility eats food prominently. Such a one attains identity with the gods and lives on nectar. These are the mantra verses.

The world is like a self-producing food which alternates between cause and effect. The seed sprouting into a tree generates many more seeds which can produce many more trees. All the trees that grow to maturity can in turn bring forth more seeds which in turn grow into millions more trees. Origin, growth, fecundity, decay, death, and continued regeneration keep the world going endlessly. The most vital secret in such recurring generation is the essential ignorance that blindfolds the regenerating individuals who do not see that it is in their power to open the inner eyes of their souls to see their inherent immortality and the path to realization. One becoming many and specialization leading to death and rebirth is the dynamic characteristic of nature (*prakṛti*). Hence the *Upaniṣad* says the ignorant householder is both the enjoyer and the object of enjoyment of the whole universe. To put it in another way the *Upaniṣad* says everyone is alternately the cause as well as the effect of everyone else. Thus the father spoken of here is neither *brahma* nor *īśvara*. It is the universal cause and effect complex conceived and projected by the ignorant and desire-filled mind of the householder, the worldly person. Like all other forms of life human beings are endowed

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with animation. Their physical cerebration is coordinated with organs of perception and organs of action. Because of the previous registration of sense impressions that are painful and pleasurable, they have a natural propensity to allow their sense organs to relate with pleasure-giving objects and to be extracted from painful contexts. This conditioning to pain and pleasure makes an ignorant person a natural hedonist who meditates on hoarding objects of pleasure and frequenting situations which are pleasing. In due course one's intelligence *(medhā)* becomes a habitual instrument to discern pleasure and seek it at all cost. This preoccupation with pleasure-seeking puts one on par with all other animals that always live at an instinct level. The contemplative power latent in one's intelligence *(medhā)* becomes pale and ineffective through disuse. As one's mind is now in agreement with the low and instinctive quality of pleasure-hunting, one's organs of action are also constantly commissioned to engage in actions that can fulfill the low desires of the mind.

The kinds of food are: nourishment in general, the relationship with cosmic energies, the lively interests fed by the transactions of the waking state, the subjective richness of the dream state, the regenerating quiet of deep sleep that frees the senses and the mind from externalities to return to the waking and the dream state with fresh vigor and clarity. Food is an aid for a being to conduct itself in its period of existence. To suit this convenience not only animate things but the inanimate are each given a specifically designed body that has its own class name, distinctive form and a specific dimension that can claim its own space and time to occupy from the moment of its manifestation to the moment of its disappearance.

The totality of the cause of these seven kinds of facilities is called the "father" and not the *hiraṇyagarbha* alone. Every being in a particular cycle that has a subjective function as well as an objective action or reaction can be spoken of as belonging to the primal cause called "father." In the *Upaniṣad* the subjective function is called *medhayā* in the context of meditation. Similarly it is spoken of as performing rites when the body acts.

Mantra 2

'yatsaptānnāni medhayā tapasājanayatpitā' iti medhayā

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hi tapasājanayatpitā. `ekamasya sādhāraṇam' iti damevāsya tatsādhāraṇamannam yadidamadyate. sa ya etadupāsate na sa pāpmano vyāvartate, miśram hyetat. 'dve devānabhājayat' iti hutam ca prahutam ca, tasmāddevebhyo juhvati ca pra ca juhvati; atho āhurdarśapūrṇamāsāviti. tasmānneiṣṭayājukaḥ syāt. 'paśubhya ekam prāyacchat' iti taipayaḥ. payo hyevāgre manuṣyaśca paśavaścopajīvanti; tasmāt kumāram jātam gṛtam vai vāgre pratilehyanti, stanam vānudhāpayanti; atha vatsam jātamāhuratṛṇād iti. `tasmin sarvam pratiṣṭhitam yacca prāṇiti yacca na' iti payasi hidam sarvam pratiṣṭhitam yacca prāṇiti yacca na. tadyadidamāhuḥ, samvatsaram payasā juhvadapa punarmṛtyum jayatīti, na tathā vidyāt; yadahareva juhoti tadahaḥ punarmṛtyumapajayatyevam vidvān, sarvam hi devebhyo'nnādyam prayacchati. `kasmāttāni na kśīyante-'dyamānāni sarvadā' iti puruṣā vā akṣitiḥ, sa hidamannam punaḥ punarjanayate. `yo vaitāmakṣitim veda' iti puruṣo vā akṣitiḥ, sa hidamannam dhiyā dhiyā janayate karmabhiḥ; yaddhaitanna kuryātkṣīyeta ha; `so'nnamatti pratīkena' iti mukham pratīkam, mukhenetyetat. `sa devānapigacchati sa ūrjamupajīvati' iti praśaṁsā.

Word Meanings

pitā yat medhayā tapasā sapta annāni ajanayat - (See above); *iti* - this (means); *pitaa medhasā tapasā hi* - verily; *ajanayat ekam asya sādhāraṇam* - (as before); *iti* - this (means): *yat* - which; *idam* - this (food); *adyate* - is eaten; *idam* - this (is); *eva* - indeed; *asya* - of all beings; *sādhāraṇam* - general; *annam* - food; *saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *etat* - this; *upāsate* - adores, appropriates; *saḥ* - one; *pāpmanaḥ* - from sin; *na* - never; *vyāvartate* - is away; *etat* - this; *hi* - for; *miśram* - (is) common (food); *dve devān abhājayat* - (as before); *iti* - this (means); *hutam ca* - making libations in the fire; *prahutam* - giving (other) offerings to the gods; *ca* - and; *tasmāt* - therefore; *devebhyaḥ* - to the gods; *juhvati ca* - (they) make libations; *pra-juhvati* - gives offerings; *ca* - and; *atho* - however; *āhuḥ* - (some say); *darśa-pūrṇamāsau* - the new-moon and full-

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moon sacrifices; *iti*; *tasmāt* - therefore; *iṣṭiyājukaḥ* - sacrificer for material results; *na* - not; *syāt* - (one) should be; *ekam paśubhyaḥ prāyacchat* - (As before, meaning); *tat* - it (is); *payaḥ* - milk; *manuṣyaḥ ca* - humans; *paśavaḥ* - animals; *ca* - and; *agre* - at first; *payaḥ* - milk; *eva* - only; *hi* - for; *upajīvanti* - live on; *tasmāt* - therefore; *jātam* - new-born; *kumāram* - a child; *agre* - at first; *ghṛtam* - melted butter; *eva* - only; *vā* - either; *pratilehyanti* - may lick; *stanam* - the breast; *vā* - or; *anudhāpayanti* - make suckle; *atha* - and; *jātam* - new calf; *āhuḥ* - (they) say of; *atṛnādaḥ*- not eating grass *iti*; *yat ca prāṇiti yat ca na tasmin sarvam pratiṣṭhitam* - (As before); *iti* - this (means): *yat ca* - whatever; *prāṇiti* - is animate; *yat* - whatever; *ca* - and; *na* (is) not; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *payasi* - on milk; *hi* - indeed; *pratiṣṭhitam* - rests; *tat* - on this point; *idam yat* - what; *āhuḥ* - (some *brāhmaṇa* texts) say; *payasā* - with milk; *samvatsaram* - for a year; *juhvat* - making offerings (in the fire); *punarmṛtyum* - further death; *apajayati* - conquers; *iti*; *tathā* - like that; *na* - not; *vidyāt* - (one) should understand; *evam* - as above; *vidvān* - one who knows; *yat ahā* - which day; *juhoti* - (he) makes offering; *tat* - that; *ahaḥ* - day; *eva* - very; *punarmṛtyum apajayati devebhyaḥ* - to the gods; *hi* - for; *sarvam* - all; *anna-adyam* - eatable food; *prayacchati* - one offers; *sarvadā adyamānāni tāni kasmāt na kṣīyante* - (As before); *iti* - this (means): *puruṣaḥ* - person (the eater); *vai* - verily; *akṣitiḥ* - (is the cause of their) inexhaustibility; *saḥ* - one; *hi* - because; *idam* - this; *annam* - food; *punaḥ punaḥ* - again and again; *janayate* - creates; *yaḥ vai etām akṣitim veda* - (As before); *iti* - this (means): *puruṣaḥ vai akṣitiḥ, saḥ hi idam annam* - (as before); *dhiyā dhiyā* - through meditations for the time being; *karmabhiḥ* - (and) through activities; *janayate* - creates; *yat ha* - if perchance; *etat* - this; *na* - not; *kuryāt* - (one) does; *kṣīyeta* - (it) is exhausted; *ha* - surely; *saḥ pratīkena annam atti* - (As before); *iti* - this (means): *pratīkam* - *pratīka*; *mukham* - (is) mouth (prominence); *mukhena* - as the mouth (prominently) *iti etat* - that is to say; *saḥ devān apigacchati saḥ ūrjam upajīvati* - (As before); *iti* - this; *praśaṁsā* - (is) eulogy

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"That the father created seven kinds of food through meditation and rites" means that the father verily created them through meditation and rites. "One was the general food of all beings" means that his food which is eaten (by all) is indeed that general food of all beings. One who appropriates this food is never away from sin, for this is the common food (of all). "Two assigned to the gods" means making libations in the fire and giving other offerings to the gods. Therefore people make libations to the gods in the fire and give them other offerings. Some, however, hold that these two mean the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices. Therefore one should not be (chiefly) occupied with the *iṣṭi* sacrifice for material results. "One he gave to animals" means -- it is milk, for humans and animals at first live on milk only. Therefore people either make a new-born child lick only melted butter or suckle it. And they say of a new-born calf that it is not yet eating grass. "Whatever lives and whatever does not all rest on this" means whatever is animate and inanimate indeed rests on milk. On this point it is said that by making offerings of milk in the fire for a year one overcomes further death. One should not understand like that. One who knows as above overcomes further death on that very day on which the offering is made. For one offers all eatable food to the gods. "Why are the foods not exhausted though they are constantly being consumed?" means that the eater is verily the cause of their inexhaustibility, because one creates this food through meditations for the time being and through activities. If perchance one does not do this, it will surely be exhausted. In the sentence, "One eats food prominently *(pratīkena)*," *'pratīka'* means front (prominence). So the meaning is, prominently. "One attains identity with the gods; one lives on nectar" is eulogy.

As we move from the first *brāhmaṇa* to the fifth *brāhmaṇa*, we can notice a very surprising approach to the genesis theory of the world. In this *Upaniṣad* God is not postulated as the creator. The substance which manifests as the very earliest beginning of the world is not described as either divine or immortal. The mor-

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tal and transient materiality which we see around us is considered as the primeval matter or substance from which the world has evolved. The rishi presents the genesis just like a natural philosopher would do. Usually birth is postulated as the antecedent of death. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* these events are reversed. Death is spoken of as a primeval condition into which life emerges as a reciprocating and contradictory factor.

All four aspects of the Absolute can be seen in *brāhmaṇas* one and two. They are: 1) the paradoxical emergence of contradictory potencies such as death and life; 2) reciprocity such as of the demand of death which is met by the provision of life; 3) complementarity of life involving death and death involving life; and 4) the cancelling out of opposites which brings a neutral zero in which there is absolute unity. Death was presented first as an inevitable fear generated by hunger. The negativity of hunger was met with the promise of food by the golden egg *(hiraṇyagarbha)*. This symbolized the polarity of a thesis and antithesis, the thesis being the yolk of the egg and the antithesis being the persistent hunger of the nucleus that is eager to transform into its adult perfection.

The hunger in the egg and the provision of food in the form of the yolk represent the functional continuity of the world order. Thus in the very heart of the Absolute there is a lurking paradox of both knowledge and ignorance. The seeming contradiction and conflict between the opposites is not essentially a theme of destruction. Rather it implies a transformation of potentials into a greater actuality. It spells out cancellation of opposites and reciprocal fulfillment of counterparts. In this presentation not only was there no allusion to a divinity, but the transient nature of phenomenal manifestation was also made explicit.

The first model given was the *prajāpati* which literally means the presiding deity of individuation. That marked the beginning of the emergence of the first three of the basic physical elements of nature, earth, water, and fire. Water is more basic than both fire and earth. In a living being, where there is a physical effort, the effort generates sweat. Sweat is watery and has the thermal quality of fire. When heat leaves water, water solidifies into ice. This principle symbolically represents fire, water, and earth. The organic aspect then was supplemented with the biologic principle of vital energy *(prāṇa)*. When the *prajāpati* became endowed with *prāṇa* and mind it became capable of forming ideas and articu-

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lating ideas with words. Then its status changed from that of *prajāpati* into *brahmaspati*. With more perfection it became *brahmaṇaspati*, the immortal issuing forth from the mortal. Such a manifestation is considered a miraculous creation.

Out of the contemplating *brahmaṇaspati* then came the first cogitating man (Manu) and the archetypal female (Śatarūpa), who represents nature. It was for her to give birth to all of the various concomitant species within the genus of sentient beings. When the world became thus populated with living beings it became necessary to formulate the laws of world order. Thus Manu became the first law giver and the *prajāpati* gained the status of universal father. The universal father created seven kinds of food. The first one is nourishment for all beings. This food includes both the pure and the impure. With the partaking of that food nobody becomes immortal or Self-realized. The universal father created food using intelligence and also creative rituals. This gives us the secret of all programs of action. With one's intelligence the purpose of a program is to be envisioned and by employing methodology one accomplishes the factual achievement.

The following illustration will aid in understanding what is spoken of here as the creative process. Suppose an artist is lying asleep. Nearby is an easel with canvas fixed upon it. Unopened color tubes are there, along with a color palette and unused brushes. After some time the environment changes. The sun rises, darkness recedes, and in its place the contours of mountains are seen. In the garden flowers open. Large and small trees appear. Birds sing. The throb of life comes from everywhere. As a part of it the artist gets up. There is no image in his mind. Nothing is painted on the canvas. The pigments are still in the tubes. This is somewhat like the beginning of the world. In the place of the artist we have to see the universal father. Just as the environmental factors emerged one by one, the universal father also emerges, not as a creator, but as an important factor in the creative process.

Like the artist, the universal father also sees bubbling streams surfacing from his deep unconscious and filling his mind with dazzling suggestions of form and color. When the artist dips his brush in color and starts making the first stroke he doesn't know whether he is going to create an immortal work of art or spoil his canvas. In the lyrical, rational and mechanical world designed by the intelligence of the creative agent of the first de-

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gree of creation there was probably such an anxiety. The *prajāpati* or universal father is only an archetypal model. That function is shared by millions of such agents in the creation process. Between right vision and enormous confusion the creativity of the world progresses.

Mantra 3

'trīṇyātmane'kuruta' iti mano vācam prāṇam, tānyātmane'kuruta; 'anyatramanā abhūvam, nādarśam', 'anyatramanā abhūvam, nāśrauṣam' iti, manasā hyeva paśyati, manasā śruṇoti. kāmaḥ saṅkalpo vicikitsā śraddhaśraddha dhṛtiradhṛtirhrīrdhīrbhīrityetatsarvam mana eva; tasmādapi pṛṣṭhata upaspṛṣṭo manasā vijānāti; yaḥ kaśca śabdo vāgeva sā. eṣā hyantamāyattā, eṣā hi na; prāṇo'apāno vyāna udānaḥ samāno'na ityetatsarvam prāṇa eva; etanmayo vā ayamātmā vāṅmayo manomayaḥ prāṇamayaḥ.

Word Meanings

trīṇi ātmane akuruta - (as before); *iti* - this (means); *manaḥ* - the mind; *vācam* - the word; *prāṇam* - (and) the vital force; *tāni* - these; *ātmane* - for himself; *akuruta* - (he) fixed; (they say) *anyatramanāḥ* - absent-minded; *abhūvam* - (I) was; *na* - not; *adarśam* - (I) saw; *anyatramanāḥ abhūvam*, *na* - not; *aśrouṣam* - (I) heard; *iti*; *manasā* - through the mind; *hi* - for; *eva* - alone; *paśyati* - (one) sees; *manasā* - through the mind; *śṛṇoti* - (one) hears; *kāmaḥ* - desire; *saṅkalpaḥ* - resolution; *vicikitsā* - doubt; *śraddha* - faith; *aśraddha* - want of faith; *dhṛtiḥ* - patience; *adhṛtiḥ* - impatience; *hrīḥ* - modesty; *dhīḥ* - intelligence; *bhīḥ* - fear; *iti* - etc; *etat* - this; *sarvam* - all; *manaḥ* - (is) the mind; *eva* - only; *tasmāt* - therefore; *pṛṣṭhataḥ* - from behind; *api* - even; *upaspṛṣṭaḥ* - being touched; *manasā* - through the mind; *vijānāti* - (one) discerns; *yaḥ kaḥ ca* - whatever; *śabdaḥ* - sound (is there); *sā vāk* - (is) the well-known speech; *eva* - indeed; *eṣā* - it; *hi* - because; *antam* - decision (revelation about every-

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thing); *āyattā* - underlies; *eṣā* - it (is); *hi na* - not; *prāṇaḥ* - *prāṇa; apānaḥ* - *apāna; vyānaḥ* - *vyāna; udānaḥ* - *udāna; samānaḥ* - *samāna; anaḥ* - *ana; itī etat* - this; *sarvam* - all; *prāṇaḥ* - (is) the vital force; *eva* - only; *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - body (miscalled self by the ignorant); *vai* - verily; *etanmayaḥ* - (is) composed of these; *vāṅmayaḥ* - composed of speech; *manomayaḥ* - composed of the mind; *prāṇamayaḥ* - composed of the vital force

"Three he fixed for himself" means the mind, the organ of speech and the vital force; these he fixed for himself. (They say), "My mind was elsewhere, so I did not see," "My mind was elsewhere, so I did not hear." For everybody sees, and hears, through the mind alone. Desire, resolution, doubt, faith, want of faith, patience, impatience, modesty, intelligence and fear - all these are simply (forms of) the mind. Therefore if one is touched even from behind, one discovers it through the mind. And whatever sound is there is indeed speech; because it underlies the revelation of objects, but it is not itself subject to revelation. The *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna*, *samāna*, and *ana* - all these are only vital force. This body is verily composed of these three. It is composed of these - of speech, the mind and the vital force.

The principle of creation is defined in this mantra as the dialectical bipolarity that comes into being in the process of parents begetting their offspring. Such an event automatically makes the parent and progeny belong to a positive item of creation, *prājāpatya*. The primeval self-created *prajāpati* has now become manifold. Whether human or the species of the cows, horses, asses, birds, or insects, if male and female together create a progeny they are all *prajāpatis* in status. In the present mantra a more detailed study is given of the three kinds of foods the *prajāpati* made for itself. In the previous mantra we referred to the three kinds of food as the activities of the wakeful state, dream state, and the deep sleep state. The typical functions of these states are given as the mind, speech, and the *prāṇa*. In the wakeful state the main activity is cognitive evaluation of situa-

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tions and transactional reaction to whatever overtly catches one's attention. Although the mind is a subjective faculty it puts us in touch with the external world and transactions are not possible without the mind interpreting the cognitive data that we happen to perceive. To emphasize the fact that the mind controls the cognitive faculty examples are cited here that one does not see or hear when one's mind is not attentive to one's act of perception or hearing. Apart from sensory functions many subjective phenomena are in connection with sensory perception because of the accompanying properties of the mind such as desire, determination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, steadfastness, lack of steadfastness, shame, intelligence, and fear. The *Upaniṣad* says these are all aspects of the mind. Thus the first kind of food that is made by the *prajāpati* for himself is the interest that is being generated when a person is in a transactional situation.

The second kind of food is speech. In the present case it is to be understood as the basis of thoughts - imaginative and meditative - which are possible only with word formation. Just as the mind is observant of the external world while being a psychic function of the inner organ, speech partly surfaces in transactions when thoughts are articulated. However, what is important in thought is the arrangement of words in a syntactical order which brings out the logistics of one's thoughts and the pragmatics of one's intention. Although in the Western world empirical experience and wakeful mentation are considered to be more real than the dream, in the Upaniṣadic context the objective world is only a phenomenal appearance, while the dream manifestation of the visualized purport of words is closer to one's inner reality. Hence the word and its structure and the semiosis of thoughts finding expression through words are more significant than external perception. That is why the word of the subjective formation of thought is considered a deeper function than mentation.

The source of energy for transactions or for the articulation of thoughts is the vital breath *(prāṇa)*. The *prāṇa* is consistently functioning, taking care of the whole of life - both its autonomous and voluntary systems. It is the *prāṇa* which sets the rhythm of the altering states of consciousness. In *suṣupti*, when the voluntary system is totally suppressed, the *prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, samāna, udāna,* and *ana* are meticulously functioning. The pause or break in the ego consciousness is stealthily restored every time consciousness leaves the threshold of deep sleep and re-

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enters the areas of dream or wakeful experience. Thus the mind, speech, and *prāṇa* can be considered symbolic of the wakeful, dream, and deep sleep states. These altering states are all prominent in the life of a householder who is drawn to different programs of action because of his or her ignorance of the Self which leads to constant attraction to the phenomenal world and to the action situations which repeatedly arise in the wakeful in a gross manner and in the dream as subjective semblances of *karma*.

Mantra 4

trayo lokā eta eva; vāgevāyam lokaḥ; mano'narikṣalokaḥ, prāṇo'sau lokaḥ

Word Meanings

ete - these (are); *eva* - indeed; *trayaḥ* - the three; *lokāḥ* - worlds; *vāk* - the word; *eva* - itself; *ayam lokaḥ* (is) this world (the earth); *manaḥ* - the mind; *antarikṣalokaḥ* - the sky; *prāṇaḥ* - (and) the vital force; *asau lokaḥ* - that world (heaven)

These are indeed the three worlds. The word is the earth, the mind is the sky, and the vital force is heaven.

The three worlds are the world of words, the mind and *prāṇa*. They are respectively called *bhurloka*, *bhuwarloka*, and *suvarloka*. This world is woven out of the meaning content of words. The mind is none other than the atmosphere in which everything is posited, where it is influenced by already existing factors and transformed into the consciousness of the individual. With the breath we are respiring, we are always reaching toward the next moment, the next possibility, the next word. This most primary formation of ideas comes in the mind as a stream of consciousness. Just as several water particles hold on to each other and through their mutual cohesion the flow of the stream is made possible, the many unitary ideas which pop up in the

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mind as conceptual word symbols cling together because of the relationship and affinity between them. Letters connect themselves to each other with the use of vowels, word formations with appropriate pauses between them make sentences and definite envisionings of thoughts come in the mind. Therefore the mind is to be considered as nothing other than a word that transpires between the larynx and the oral function of verbalizing words. On one side it has connections with the hearing faculty and on the other with the speaking faculty. Both these are related with the motor function of the hand with which a word can be written on a piece of paper. *Prāṇa* is used as an energy vehicle initially to facilitate thought and later speech or writing. Just as space gives occasion for things to present themselves, in the inner environment of consciousness accompanied by other biological functions the thought or the word becomes organically connected with the ever-growing process of the individual who in turn is connected with society.

There is always a directional flow of consciousness from the past to the present and on to the future. At the same time it is also to be understood as the future life of an individual placing both the subject matter and object matter that are to be transformed into active life experiences in the present and depositing them in the past for convenient recall. Thus there are three aspects: the word, the world, which is the same as the mind, and the vital energy. The vital energy combines in it the physical aspects of electromagnetism and gravitation and the spiritual aspect of a continuing program of revelation which ensues from the common spirit of all.

Mantra 5

trayo vedā eta eva vāgevargvedaḥ manoyajurvedaḥ prāṇaḥ sāmvedaḥ

Word Meanings

eta eva - these are themselves; *trayovedāḥ* - the three *Vedas; vāk eva* - the word itself is; *Ṛg Veda* - the *Ṛg Veda; manaḥ* - the mind; *yajur veda* -is the *Yajur Veda; prāṇaḥ*

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- the *prāṇa; sāmavedaḥ* - is the *Sāma Veda*

These are themselves the three *Vedas*. The word itself is the *Ṛg Veda*, the mind is the *Yajur Veda*, and the vital force *(prāṇa)* is the *Sāma Veda*.

The three *Vedas* are not to be taken as separate entities. In the Christian concept of the Absolute, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are considered to be only one in spite of the three aspects spoken of. *Veda* is essentially a revelation of the Ultimate Truth in all its aspects. This comes from the definition, *veda vedavit avyaṅgyaḥ*. In scientific statements terms are explicated so as to leave no doubt in the mind of the listener. In poetic narration we arrive at several inexpressible dynamics of truth through suggestion. Truth revealed through suggestion is *vyaṅgya*. Truth literally explicated is *avyaṅgya*. *Veda* is total revelation of truth and therefore it is called nonsuggestive. There is no duality between the revealer of truth and the truth that is revealed. Therefore another definition is given to *veda: apauruṣeyam vākyam vedaḥ:* "the word that is not revealed by a person." Persons are disqualified from revealing *veda* because of the ego coloration of their minds. The nature of the Supreme is described as untainted pure consciousness. The pure light that falls on a colored object such as green silk or a red flower changes its color quality as soon as it illuminates those objects. This taint which brings transformation is called *ābhāsa*. Similarly pure consciousness is not experienced by the individuated mind. That which shines in a person's mind is *ābhāsa caitanya*, tainted or colored consciousness. That is why a person is not fit to reveal the Supreme. It is said that of valid testimonies like immediate perception, inference and word revelation, infallibility is attributed only to *āgama* which is *veda*. *Āgama* is defined as *samyak parokṣa anubhava sādhanam:* "that which enables you to have intuitive certitude."

In the present mantra, the three *Vedas* are to be understood as triple aspects of one and the same *Veda*. Individual beings have three aids for comprehending the truth. One is reducing truth and phonetically symbolizing it so it can be thought of and spoken of as a word. This is essentially what is done in the *Ṛg Veda* in which everything in the universe that is to be known and can be known is referred to with appropriate names. The basis

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of semantics can be seen in the morphology of the language of the *Ṛg Veda*. Hence the word is identified with *Ṛg Veda*. Words do not hang in the air. To some extent names reflect forms and shapes of things. The varieties of appreciations give several valid dimensions to the spoken word. Conceptually, words are to be correlated. A probe is to be made into the psychodynamics of a word to see in which direction it leads the listener to arrive at its meaning. It is not a simple revelation; a process of synthesis automatically takes place. The field of synthesized words is the mind. The best example of the complex activities that take place in the mind is the performance of a ritual, *yajña*. In the ritual, algebraic notations of word meanings are complemented with protolinguistic geometric figures and body gestures. Hence mind is spoken of as the *Yajur Veda*. In either case expression is possible only by directing the dynamics of energy to make the instruments effective. The spoken word mainly depends on its phonetic form to yield any result. *Prāṇa* is to be directed to raise or lower the voice and to use flat or sharp tones. To show gestures of the hands and fingers, nerve energy is to be directed to various limbs. In the *Ṛg Veda* words occur and in the *Yajur Veda* instructions are given for the procedure of performance. Both are combined in the recitations of the *Sāma Veda*. Hence *Sāma Veda*, which gives the definitive interrelation, is considered to be an expression of *prāṇa*.

Mantra 6

devāḥ pitaro manuṣyā eta eva; vāgeva devāḥ, manaḥ pitaraḥ, prāṇo manuṣyaḥ.

Word Meanings

ete - these are; *eva* - indeed; *devāḥ* - the shining ones; *pitaraḥ* - the departed ones; *manuṣyāḥ* - (and) individual persons; *vāk* - the word; *eva* - itself; *devāḥ* - (is) the shining ones; *manaḥ* - the mind; *pitaraḥ* - the departed ones; *prāṇaḥ* - (and) the vital force; *manuṣyāḥ* - individual persons

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These are indeed the shining ones, the departed ones, and individual persons. The word itself is the shining ones, the mind is the departed ones, and the vital force is individual persons.

These mantras imply both psychology and psycho-cosmology. The word *deva* is to be understood in its widest sense as that which shines with self-luminous light. There are also a number of entities which shine with borrowed light. Physically the sun and stars are aspects of fire and fire is self-luminous. In the *Upaniṣad* we come across the reference to fire as a thermo-luminous principle (*tejas*) which is in the sky, the cloud, the air, the form, the speech, the word and its meaning, and love. This is not the element fire which we speak of in a conventional sense. It is to be seen as manifesting in our sense of pleasure, digestion of food, functional aspects of faculties and to a greater extent, in the domain of consciousness, both conditioned and unconditioned. *Deva* or the shining one is the link to the dark and inertial world of the cosmic mass in which the psychic function of both individuation and generic manifestation is preserved. In this context we should remember that *deva* was born of the primeval manifestation presented in the first chapter as *prajāpati*. In the long run of evolution, for the purpose of the description of historic development of social evolution, the shining principle in the individual is postulated to have a double in a spirit world called the *deva loka*. All the same, within the individual the shining principle functions as the eternal witness as well as the unconditioned consciousness which can lend its light for biologic and psychologic manifestation. We experience it as our cerebration especially in our acts of cognition and cogitation.

In the popular literature of legends and myths, the world of the shining ones resembles the Christian and the Islamic concepts of heaven where so-called angels, cherubim and other mythical beings like houris are said to exist. In the Upaniṣadic context such notions are considered spurious and superstitious. Thus we have to establish within us a critically examined concept of the spirit so that we will not fall in the traps of religious charlatans. From the point of view of modern science, the area of monitoring consciousness which is increasingly being identified in the hypothalamus, the cerebral cortex and the limbic system,

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is closer to the concept of the spirit than the heaven of religious mythology. The shining principle is the first hand, on-the-spot scrutinizing of all incoming stimuli. The interpretation of the stimulus with critical screening is the function of the *deva*, both in the mass of the physical body of a living organism and in the cosmic body constituted of the galactic system.

There is a hoary history of systematic conditioning that has been going on through millennia. This is the area of the departed ones. On the basis of the past experience of history, the continuity of the cosmos is kept going. Similarly, in the physical organism of the individual, the countless millions of cells have taken into them the birth, growth and death experiences in the transition of life which remain ghostlike, as the story of the life both of the cosmos and the psyche. Human beings have to look into the annals of history again and again to see how best they can tackle a new situation in which they are placed. It is clear that the departed ones are in intimate relationship with us to attack the present with inherited defense armaments. It is in this context that human beings are referred to in this mantra as transactionalists. The *pitṛloka* in us is the deep unconscious in which all incipient memories and dynamic urges are kept. That is why the *pitṛs* are equated in this mantra with the mind, especially the unconscious, of which we know very little.

The individual person is thus placed as the ego-factor to function on a moment-to-moment, day-to-day basis between the shining ones and the departed ones. Our unconscious is such that it presents the most valuable information to our conscious mind in the form of symbolic diseases, fantasies, dreams and visions, just as the galactic system is kept going with its umpteen fields of electromagnetism and gravitation. Our body-mind function is monitored and sustained by our *prāṇa*. Although the mantra is seemingly simple and slight, the profundity of its depth is inexhaustible. Such is the simplified version of the spirit of the word manifestation, its corporeality and dynamics.

Mantra 7

pitā mātā prajaita eva; mana eva pitā, vāṅmātā prāṇaḥ prajā.

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Word Meaning

ete - these (are); *eva* - indeed; *pitā* - the father; *mātā* - the mother; *prajā* - (and) the child; *manaḥ* - the mind; *eva* - itself; *pitā* - (is) the father; *vāk* - the word; *mātā* - the mother; *prāṇaḥ* - (and) the vital force; *prajā* - the child

These are indeed the father, mother, and child. The mind itself is the father, the word is the mother, and the vital force is the child.

In relating the word to the mind, two principles are to be taken cognizance of. The existential unitiveness of the ocean is structured with individual molecules of water but the ocean also has a functional reality in which the rise and fall of waves causes a plurality of functions. Similarly the basic individual points of consciousness that make the mind manifest are unitary word notations. These word notations can be differently arranged to compose specific statements of specific emphasis of mentation. The functional plurality of the mind happens as separate verbal expressions within the totality of consciousness. Hence the generality to be taken into account here is the ocean of consciousness which is supportive of individual notions that are coined with words. Mind is described as the father and the mother is said to be the most specific role of the word that has to oscillate between the self-luminous divine principle and the specific formations that come into being out of the natural matrix of embodied life energies. When we speak of the mind we have to think of it as part and parcel of the collective consciousness or the generic mind.

This subtle change of status often causes confusion in the minds of even brilliant philosophers when they attempt to decide the sustaining substantiality of truth *(sat)*. Śankara upholds the unitive aspect of clay as a primeval causal factor to which he compares the fashioning of clay into individual bodies or forms such as of a pot, jar, vase, flowerpot, water jug, or drinking cup. Then he dismisses all these as phenomenal and therefore untrue. Rāmānuja takes up the same issue and emphasizes the specific value. He speaks of the blue lotus, the blue linen, the blue sky, the blue lake, and the blue jar, and says that a specific quality

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such as blue can be a distinguishing mark of value *(ānanda)* in severally existing bodies. So one has to be watchful for the situation in which the emphasis can be rightly put on the generic existentiality of the specific operational function. The implied subtlety will not easily yield to an uncritical and non-contemplative mind.

In the *Bhagavad Gīta* we read that the Supreme Lord is the sperm-donating father *(bījapradaḥ pitā)*. It is also described as the supreme womb in which everything is nurtured *(mahat yonih)*. The sperm has a unitive aspect whether it is of a man, a lion, a tiger, a goat, an ass, an insect, a tree, or a flowering bush. Every sperm has to find an egg to join with. Taken in that sense, the mother is superior. The womb in which the zygote is to be nurtured can be that of a woman, a female monkey, a lioness or tigress. The sperm has to come, bearing genes of the particular species that is to be nurtured in that womb. Then the father becomes important. The positions of father and mother are interchangeable in accordance with the situation in which they are placed.

Every spoken word has to emerge from the deep unconscious to the threshold of the preconscious. Taken in that sense, the word is secondary to mind. If the word is not expressed or given birth to by the mother who is equated with speech, mind will become void of mentation; the mother has to speak out what is in the mind of the person. The offspring here is the manifested word or manifested action. It is the desire of the father and mother to have an offspring. The father takes the initiative and deposits the sperm into the woman. The woman watches over the zygote and incubates it for a period of time. Both the copulation of the father and mother and the woman carrying the fetus which matures into a baby are accomplished with the energy expenditure of the parents. It is actually the *apāna* which flushes the seed from the testes of the father into the womb of the mother and it is the continuous nurturing of *prāṇa* that safeguards the sperm coupled with the woman's ovum to grow into a baby. Just as *apāna* once helped the father to excrete the seed from the body system to deposit it into a woman's womb, the *apāna* in the woman gains momentum to push the baby out of her womb to deliver her of the inconvenience of having a child within her. Then the combined effort of *prāṇa* and of both the father and mother ultimately results in the presentation of the offspring to

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the parents as well as to the society to which they belong.

In this manner we find in every mantra a gradual orderly theory of development to trace our origin, continuity and fulfillment which recur without the monotony of repetition. Considering this, the present mantra takes us to a very important study of biologic continuity through conception, the period of pregnancy and the ultimate birth.

Mantra 8

vijñātam vijijñāsyamavijñātameta eva; yatkiñca vijñātam vācastadrūpam, vāgdhi vijñātā; vāgenam tadbhūtvāvati.

Word Meanings

ete - these (are); *eva* - indeed; *vijñātam* - the known; *vijijñāsyam* - what is to be known; *avijñātam* - (and) the unknown; *yat kiṁ ca* - whatever; *vijñātam* - (is) known; *tat* - that; *vācaḥ* - of speech; *rūpam* - (is) a form; *vāk* - the word; *hi* - because; *vijñāta* - (is) the knower; *vāk* - the word; *enam* - one; *tat* - that; *bhūtvā* - by becoming; *avati* - protects

There are indeed what is known, what is to be known, and what is unknown. Whatever is known is a form of the word because speech is the knower. The word protects one (who knows this) by becoming what is known.

In this mantra we are given another version of the mind *(manas)*, word *(vāk)*, and the vital force *(prāṇa)*. In the previous mantra the order was mind, word, and vital force. Here it is left to the student to arrange the mantra according to its appropriate order. Śankara arranged it similarly to mantras five and six. The word is formed from the unmanifested aspect of the Supreme *(para)* out of which the nucleus of an ideation assumes the word energy to present itself through the preconscious into the conscious mind as what is called the articulated word *(vaikhari)*. *Vaikhari*

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can be the spoken word or it can be written with representative alphabet characters. In either case it is a word symbol that evokes in the trained eye, trained ear or trained mind a conceptual awareness called *pratibha*. We can have conceptions (*pratibha*) only of whatever we have experienced as registered knowledge. Thus it is established here that the known is the word. The mind is like an ocean of possibilities in which questions rise one after another, seeking answers. That is given here as *vijijñāsyam*, that which is desired to be known. The conventional definition of *manas* or the mind is that it is of the nature of doubt seeking answers to questions. So one can say with confidence that what is termed here as *vijijñāsyam*, that which is desired to be known, represents the mind. The third aspect is *avijñātam*, that which is not known. The transparency in the presentation of the word to consciousness is half lost when we come to the mind from which words emerge and in which they submerge. Our consciousness is oblivious of the dynamics that govern the speech organ, the act of mentation and the effort needed to formulate and pronounce words. The process of ideation resulting in its verbalization is all held in the realm of vital breath (*prana*). No inkling is given ahead of time to the person concerned about which words are going to be presented in which order in consciousness.

Thus the first three stages, the absolute source of words (*para*), the nuclear formation of ideas (*paśyanti*), and the mechanics of modulating ideas into the phonetic expression of speech (*madhyama*), are held in secret. Only when the word is finally expressed does the speaker become enlightened about what is going to be spoken. Yet when the mind moves from the known to what is to be known, and aspires to gain it, the vital energy aids it by making a thorough scan in the memory system of all that has been perceived and previously conceived. What has been conceived is the nomenclature of word symbols of the meaning that has exploded in consciousness on seeing a verbal form or hearing its vocal reference. Hence the *prāṇa* is given the role of the protector of both the word and the mind. Once a verbal designation has been given to a perceived object, an intimate identity is established between the thing and its name. In our day-to-day transactional life, when we call a certain person by his or her name, we don't have to explicitly say that the name particularly belongs to a certain person. We take for granted that the name

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and the subject it refers to are the same. One of the greatest wonders of wakeful life and dream life is that the concept can play a unifying role between the subject and the object. That is why it is said here that the *prāṇa* which establishes an immediate liaison between the object and its name protects both the mind that knows with the aid of the word and the mind which aspires to know with the establishment of a semiotic bipolar relationship with whatever is to be known. What is to be known is transformed into an entity that can be transacted with.

In the *Upaniṣad* the study of semantics enters at a very early stage. This aspect of semantics was developed by Edmund Husserl in his theory of *noema* and *noesis*. When a problem is presented to consciousness a quick scanning of all associated objects and their names takes place. When the judging faculty pinpoints the most appropriate concept, the name which was previously appended to the selected memory is flashed. This is a noematic process. Long before the Western theory of noematics was developed, Aristotle postulated the *nous* and connected it with *logos*. In Indian philosophy the study was taken seriously even in the interpretation of Vedic sounds by Jaimani and his interpreters, Yāska and Śabarasvāmi, and later by Kumārilabhāta and Prabhākara. Other philosophers who delved into this subject are Nagārjuna, Bhartṛhari, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

Mantra 9

yatkiṁca vijñāsyam manasastadrūpam, mano hi vijñāsyam; mana enam tadbhūtvāvati.

Word Meaning

yat kiṁ ca - whatever; *vijñāsyam* - (is) to be known; *tat* - that; *manasaḥ* - of the mind; *rūpam* - (is) a form; *manaḥ* - mind; *hi* - because; *vijñāsyam* - (is) whatever is to be known; *manaḥ enam tat bhūtvā avati* - (Rest as before.)

Whatever is to be known is a form of the mind because the mind is what is to be known. The mind protects one (who knows this) by becoming what is to be known.

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In this mantra we are taken to the greatest subtleties of creation in which the biologic principle initiates its onward manifestation from the desires born of the incipient memories which come to the spirit that is going to be embodied. The desire of that spirit is spoken of here as the unconscious generating itself into the monitoring of the pre-conscious mind. That is the desire to be. What exactly it desires to be is formulated by the mind with the incipient memories of the past *(vāsanās)* as its building material. That which is engaged in generating the desire in the mind is the subtle dream body *(sūkṣma śarīra)* of individuating *tejas* (electro-thermo energy). Individuated *tejas* is called *taijasa*. It is in opposition to the inertial *(tamas)* which abounds in nature. Yet *tejas* has to sculpt out of *tamas* the very form that it aspires to become; inertial consciousness is made plastic and flexible to assume forms. A concept is a finished form of circumlimited consciousness that presents itself to the subtle mind as a counterpart of a perceivable object. To perceive, the mind has to go one step further and relay its cognitive or perceiving energy to fill in the molds of the sense organs. When energy of cognition associates itself with the electrical impulses of the hearing faculty, sound forms are generated. When tactual energy is channelled into a conceptual form, it becomes a special experience of touch. When energy is channelled into the conceptual mode of visual forms a clear picture of visual perception happens. It is the same for the functions of tasting and smelling. This is a process of descending dialectics from the causal to the subtle and the subtle to the gross.

The space donated by the materiality of nature becomes filled with a vibrating energy which can assume luminosity and a thermal function. It can emerge as an organism which can be continuously sustained by nourishment with a close resemblance to the element earth. When such concretization happens, two-fold world energy emerges. One is the physical perceptual entity. It is again and again supported by the mental images of conceptualization which belong to the universal perceiver (*viśva*), and the mental image born of dream-consciousness. This is the substance of the theory given in the ninth mantra. To make it clear, one has to read this explanation step by step and gradually assemble the implied gestaltation. There are two pairs of counterparts: the causal spirit and its corresponding incipient memories *(vāsanās)*; and the purposive will to generate and the mental im-

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ages emerging out of the pre-conscious to fashion an image that is existentially transactional. The whole phenomena has to be contemplatively generated in the mind to see how the mind gives both content and form to every phenomena. Once it is accomplished, the physical or physiological body becomes the definitive and ultimate in all forms of creation. What is surprising is the non-mention of a third agent of creation in the complicated process of phenomenalization. Word is the nuclear content in the formation of the mind and nourishment born of the five elements is considered to be the building block of the body that comes into being from the pure idea of the individuated cell's desire to be.

Mantra 10

yatkiñcavijñātam prāṇasya tadrūpam, prāṇo hyavijñātaḥ; prāṇa enam tadbhūtvāvati.

Word Meanings

yat kiṁ ca - whatever; *avijñātam* - (is) completely unknown; *tat* - that; *prāṇasya* - of the vital force; *rūpam* - (is) a form; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *hi* - because; *avijñātaḥ* - (is) the unknown; *prāṇaḥ enam tat bhūtvā avati* - (As before.)

Whatever is unknown is a form of the vital force because the vital force is what is unknown. The vital force protects one (who knows this) by becoming what is unknown.

Certain things are totally unknown. We infer their existence from certain results. Other things come into our observation and yet we are not able to be sure of their true nature. In either case we decide that they are aspects of *prāṇa* because, according to the *a priori* teachings of the *Upaniṣads* (*śrutis*), *prāṇa* is an unknown factor. In the world of consciousness there is the well-known, which is the same as the word, that which desires to know, which is identical with the mind, and that which is not

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known, which is none other than *prāṇa*. In spite of *prāṇa* not being directly perceived, there are references to it in the *Upaniṣads*. The scheme of the *Upaniṣad* is that the first reality is food *(anna)*, the second reality is *prāṇa*, and the third is *manas*. In regards to the physical manifestation of the Self, the same order of food, vital essence, and the mind is followed. In the interpretation of the previous mantra we pointed out that a mother brings nourishment to a fetus within her by converting the essence of her food into nourishment for the baby. Although others do not know or feel the growing existence of the baby in her womb, she is very sure of its presence and she feels a responsibility to take care of it. Although *prāṇa* seems to be of an altogether different category, it maintains the biologic metabolism of the growing baby. In the digestive system it is the vital breath that oxidizes the food that is to be analyzed and synthesized by bringing to it various digestive juices and gaseous elements. Thus *prāṇa* is intimately related with *anna*. It monitors the distribution of the nourishment with the circulatory system and other devices. The three aspects of our earlier growth at the body level are food (*anna*), vital breath *(prāṇa)*, and the mind (*manas)*. This more or less covers the physical reality of an embodied self. After the triple aspects of the gross body *(sthula śarīra)* are explained, the *Upaniṣad* goes into the spirit aspect of the further elaboration of individuation. No detail is left out as this study gradually goes from a precedent system to a consequent system.

Mantra 11

tasyai vācaḥ pṛthivī śarīram, jyotīrūpamayamagniḥ; tadyāvatyeva vāk, tāvatī pṛthivī, tāvānayamagniḥ.

Word Meanings

tasyāḥ vācaḥ - of that organ of speech; *pṛthivī* - the earth; *śarīram* - (is) the body; *ayam* - this; *agniḥ* - fire; *jyotīrūpam* - is the luminous form; *tat* - now; *yāvatī* - as far as; *eva* - just; *vāk* - the organ of speech extends, *tāvatī* - so far; *pṛthivī* - the earth; *tāvān* - so far; *ayam* - this; *agniḥ* - fire

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The earth is the body of that organ of speech, and this fire is its luminous form. And as far as the organ of speech extends, so far does the earth, and so far this fire.

Prajāpati was given in the earlier *brāhmaṇas* as the first model of the creator. The nourishment of that creator was said to be the word. In the *Chāndogya* and *Aitareya Upaniṣads* also it is said that it was with the word that creation was made. Word has the power to generate the concretization of concepts. An external object is a perceptual counterpart of a subjective notion. The word also is said to have two aspects: the antecedent cause and the consequent effect. The desire to create is the causal aspect of the word; concretization comes as an effect. The effect is always inertial and is manifested outside as the basis of perception. Narayana Guru calls it *bhānāśraya*. The causal factor is conceptually superimposed or introjected into the concretized aspect of creation. Both the causal aspect and the consequent effect are generated and maintained by the intentionality of the word which issues forth from the agent of creation, the *prajāpati*.

In the manifestation which follows, the intention of the creator has in it a psychologic aspect and a physical aspect. The psychologic aspect is the intention and the physical aspect is the instrumentation. The intention which is being expressed as the word and the perceptual concretization which comes to serve as the instrument to sustain the cumulative aspect of intention have between them a one to one correspondence both in their dimensions and in their constituent details. In spite of this inherent homogeneity between the meaning of the word and the manifested body, each can be clearly differentiated from the other as belonging to different orders. For example, when a person experiences a cat, or a tree, or a hill, or a grain of sand, each one is referred to by different phonetic expressions in different languages. But if the person who mentions the names knows what he or she refers to, the correspondence between the concept and the percept which refer to the actual object will not undergo any alteration in word content or mass.

Just as a physical light illuminates a physical object, the word has a luminosity which reveals its meaning. Thus the light of the word is the substantiality which stands for the object in

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the viewer's mind and reveals the form. This is also true of the other aspects of revelation of sensory properties. When the Self is seen as a person with a physical form, the Self is understood as that which permeates a total being delimited by the physical form of the person. Word permeates or name permeates the being or object to which that name is given. Afterwards we will come to know more of the spirit that permeates the body which seems to be animated through and through. Entering a thing and being it, as Bergson puts it, is called *anupraveśam* in Sanskrit. *Anu* means conjoined in a like manner, *praveśa* means entering. Several examples of *anupraveśa* are given in Vedānta. When a sword is put in its sheath the body of the sword fills the entire hollow of the sheath. Similarly, when a cat is called cat, the catness which justifies the name fills the entire body of the cat and the entire name of cat in an unmistakable manner. Another example given is of an iron ball which is made red hot by fire. The iron ball is an inertial metallic body. When it is red hot, every atom of it has been given a certain thermal quality. The fire enters the iron ball and remains in it as fire. Here the fire is the causal factor and the inertial metallic ball stands for the basis of physical perception and the circumlimitation of the body. In the course of our study this relationship between cause and effect, the noumenon of the Self and the phenomenality of the world, will be given in greater detail.

Mantra 12

athaitasya manaso dyauḥ śarīram. jyotīrūpam-asāvādityaḥ; tadyāvadeva manaḥ, tāvatī dyauḥ, tāvān-asāvādityaḥ; tau mithunam samaitām, tatahḥ prāṇo-'jāyata; sa indraḥ, sa eṣo'sapatnaḥ, dvitīyo vai sapatnaḥ; nāsya sapatno bhavati ya evam veda.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *etasya manasaḥ* - of this mind; *dyauḥ* - heaven; *śarīram* - (is) the body; *asau* - that; *ādityaḥ* - sun; *jyotīrūpam* - (its) luminous form (organ); *tat* - now; *yāvat* - as far as; *eva* - just; *manaḥ* - the mind (extends);

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tāvatī - so far; *dyauḥ* - heaven; *tāvān* - so far; *asau* - that; *ādityaḥ* - sun; *tau* - the two; *mithunam* - union; *samattām* - attained; *tataḥ* - from that; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *ajāyata* - was born; *saḥ* - it; *indraḥ* - (is) the lord; *saḥ eṣaḥ* this; *sapatnaḥ* - (is) without an adversary; *dvitīyaḥ* - a second (being); *vai* - indeed; *sapatnaḥ* - (is) an adversary; *yaḥ* - who; *enam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *asya* - one; *sapatnaḥ* - adversary; *na* - not; *bhavati* - exists

Now heaven is the body of this mind, and that sun its luminous form. And as far as the mind extends, so far does heaven, and so far that sun. The two were united and from that the vital force was born. It is the lord and it is without an adversary. A second being is indeed an adversary. No adversary exists for one who knows thus.

Each of our sense organs is so made that it can receive only one stimulus at a time. Thus the reception of stimuli comes in an orderly manner of one after the other. When we hear a sound, the span of hearing may last for several seconds. The receptor receives identical stimuli one after another, then the quality, nature or quantum of the stimulus changes. The registered stimuli are sequentially arranged in the cognitive faculty of hearing. The continuous stimuli that come from an object of visible perception are similarly registered. This pattern of auditory and visual stimuli is also true of the stimuli that come from our faculties of touch, taste and smell. According to known patterns in the association area of the brain the sequential receptions of sensory patterns are interrelated, correlated, and coordinated for the purpose of interpreting the stimuli received as a collective sensory impact. The various stimuli received through different sensory channels are presented to the cogitating faculty which belongs to the inner psychic organ referred to with the blanket phrase, mind *(manas)*. These individual stimuli are drawn from different points of occurrence in space and time and assembled into a unitary field of consciousness. The aggregates of stimuli presented with organic correlation and coordination have a time-space orientation. The area that is beyond the sensory affector is called

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heaven or the space which enables us to have orientation of perceptions. In the mantra it is stated as *atha tasya manaso dyauḥ śarīram*. Just as our individuated consciousness is held together by our bodily system, the field of consciousness is said to be held together by the living space. Now comes the question, "What is the nature of the heaven of the living space?" The *Upaniṣad* says its intrinsic nature is having the luminosity of consciousness. Luminosity is *prakāśātmakata* which is of the form of light *jyotirūpam*. We can take our visual perception as representative of all forms of perception. The visibility of the world is derived from the objective illumination rendered by the brightness of sunlight. What consciousness is to the body the sun is to the skies. When sunlight illuminates a body with the contrast of light and shade, the body projects its form with contours. Within the field of vision, several specific designs stand in contrast to each other, claiming for each form a name as well as a meaning. Visible perception presents the facts and figures of whatever is visualized to the mind. The same principle of illumination applies to hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Thus a vast field of consciousness comes into purview to account for the here and now experience of ontologic perception.

The mechanism of consciousness is such that any part of it can be taken into the storage house of memory and for the time being it can be looked upon as relegated to the past. Just as a cow swallows more than it can chew and digest at once and afterwards conveniently brings its cud back little by little into its mouth for ingesting, the innumerable details of sensory perception are tucked away into the secret chamber of memory and called back later by the cogitative faculty to discover their meaningful relationships within the matrix of registered experiences of stimulation.

When the sun's light falls on an object it becomes visible as a red flower, a yellow fruit, a black stone, or a blue lake. These colors are the complex products of sunlight reflected from objects and refracted through the biochemical properties of the rods and cones of the retina. After being changed into electrical impulses in the retina, they travel to the visual area of the cortex screened through the thalamus. The presentation of a colored object is a magical product created within us. Yet all people see the same object projected into time and space with the same morphological precision and color patterns.

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The sun in the heavens is responsible for physical illumination and the reflection of light. One of the most ingenious aspects of nature's engineering is to bring the reflections of objects several times bigger than the pupil of the eye to a point where the luminous representative of the object is thoroughly converted into an electrical impulse that can be maintained by the chemistry of the brain. The sun outside and the cogitative and connative faculty within work together. Between the outer world of registration and interpretation there is a one to one correspondence between all points that are to be coordinated. Hence the mind is not a particular faculty. There are two dialectical principles in cognitive perception, cogitative examination, and connative decision. The conscious mind has to receive from its preconscious threshold a number of words that have been coined in the continuous process of a stimulus being interpreted. This is spoken of here as the copulation between the luminous (electrical stimulation) and the inner faculty which has many ingenious devices to animate the brain's biologic and physiologic equipment to articulate the combined effect and read meaning into the passing moments of perception.

In order to carry on this psychobiological, psychophysical, and psychochemical function, there is a continuous generation of *prāṇa* or vital energy. As *prāṇa* is intrinsically related with the sensory system and enables the senses to function without pause and with absolute credibility, it has no rival. It is called *indra*. The senses are called *indriyās*. *Indra* is, so to say, the presiding principle of the faculties of sensory perception. This cognitive, cogitative, and connative agent of interpretation has no substitute. Therefore *indra* is said to be without a second. The student who understands this mysterious arrangement should rise to the same level of efficiency to become an unrivalled knower of the individuated person's engineering of knowing and storing signals and ideograms as replicas of everything that passes on. Word memory is derived from the power to mimic. The knowledge generated in us is unrivalled; the knower also should be an unrivalled knower.

Mantra 13

athaitasya prāṇasyāpaḥ śarīram, jyotīrūpamasau can-

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draḥ; tadyāvāneva prāṇaḥ, tāvatya āpaḥ, tāvānasau candraḥ, ta ete sarva eva samāḥ, sarve'nantāḥ, sa yo haitānantavat upāsate'ntavantam sa lokam jayati; atha yo haitānanantānupāsate'nantam sa lokam jayati.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *etasya prāṇasya* - of this vital force; *āpaḥ* - water; *śarīram* - (is) the body; *asau* - that; *candraḥ* - moon; *jyotīrūpam* - (is) the luminous form; *tat* - now; *yāvān* - as far as; *eva* - just; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force (extends); *tāvatyaḥ* - so far; *āpaḥ* - water; *tāvān* - so far; *asau* - that; *candraḥ* - moon; *te* - those; *ete* - these; *sarve* - all; *eva* - indeed; *samah* - (are) equal; *sarve* - all; *anantāḥ* - endless; *saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *ha* - indeed; *etān* - these; *antavataḥ* - limited; *upāste* - meditates on; *saḥ* - one; *antavantam* - limited; *lokam* - world; *jayati* - conquers; *atha* on the other hand; *yaḥ* - who; *ha* - indeed; *etān* - these; *anantān* - as unlimited; *upāsate* - meditates on; *saḥ* - one; *anantam* - unlimited; *lokam* - world; *jayati* - conquers

Water is the body of this vital force, and that moon its luminous form. And as far as the vital force extends, so far does water, and so far that moon. These are all equal (in extent), and all endless. Whoever meditates on these as limited conquers a limited world. On the other hand, whoever meditates on these as unlimited conquers an unlimited world.

This mantra has reference to the first three mantras of *brāhmaṇa* five. When we study this mantra we should keep those mantras and their explanations in mind. In the first mantra we read that the father (*prajāpati*) created seven kinds of food with his knowledge and effort. One kind of food was for the nourishment of the whole world. Two kinds of food were generated for the nourishment of the shining ones *(devas)*. Three kinds of food he set apart for himself. One kind of food he gave to all

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lower animals which include those beings which breathe and those that do not breathe. The food that is eaten does not diminish. One who understands the mysterious secret of why the food that is eaten never diminishes becomes a proper eater of the food, and is worthy of becoming like a *deva*. A person is not merely the body; therefore nourishment should be given both to the physical body and to the knowing Self. The two functions of the Self are: knowing everything through intelligence and exerting oneself physically in accordance with that intelligence. The use of the word *tapas* indicates one's preparedness to work energetically to achieve the conceived result. Although only the reference to a person is given, no person is singular. Each person is likely to be connected with his or her family. Therefore the food spoken of here is for the whole family.

The *prajāpati* created food in accordance with his knowledge and with his perseverance. This is the food that nourishes the ordinary members of the world of creation. It is not free of sin. Therefore those who live do not transcend life and death. The two kinds of food offered to the *devas* were also not free of attached strings of desire. The food that is given to all beings is like milk because it is the essence of nourishment. Human beings and the babies of many lower animals all begin with the partaking of milk. Food is said to be non-diminishing because hunger is always before the living being and it is inevitable to find food periodically to keep the life going. Living persons are ever-vigilant to see that they have enough food stored to keep life going.

In the third mantra we read that the food which the *prajāpati* made for himself is for the retention of the mind, word, and *prāṇa*. Even when our senses are directed towards objects, they function only when they are directed by the inner psychic organ, the mind. Desire, imagination, fear, attention, indifference, steadfastness, forgetfulness, sense of shame and intelligence are all aspects of the mind. The mind is a coordinating principle which functions totally even when the stimulus is partial. Any discernible sound is a word. On hearing a word the mind cannot be inattentive. It seeks the full meaning and all relationships with associated ideas. A word is self-luminous. It is not illuminated by another principle. The various aspects of vital breath, such as *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *udāna*, *vyāna* and *samāna*, are the same as *prāṇa*. The *ātma* or the Self is an aggregate of the body, sens-

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es, mind and all the implications of word meaning. So *prāṇa* is to be taken in a collective and universal sense. With these notions in mind, we come to this mantra.

Mantras twelve and thirteen are complementary. In mantra twelve our empirical world of experience is referred to. We have to compare and contrast it with the conceptual world of subjectivity which is referred to in mantra thirteen. The subject is the seer and the object is the seen. In the empirical world, the subject shares in the wakeful experience of a body which is aroused by the physical energy that flows into the sensory system. The stimuli are coming into the physiological body from determined locations in space. The flow of energy is relevant to the time when that particular location is capable of generating physical energy. Although a physical stimulation can happen in the day or night, wakeful hours are conventionally identified with the illumination given to this world by solar energy.

The Sanskrit name for the eye is *netram*. This is derived from *neta* which means 'the guide'. All five sensory organs are correlated and in the daily experience of life the eye directs the other organs to participate in the area which the eye observes. Therefore visible perception is given a greater importance than the other forms of perception. As visible perception is primarily connected with the sun, our world of empirical actuality is considered to be presided over by the sun. The sun is the most impressive luminous body in the sky. In the daytime when the sun is shining we cannot say how far the sunlight has permeated in the heavens. The first thing the *Upaniṣad* says in the twelfth mantra is that for all practical purposes the area of the sun and the sunlight are the same. Throughout that field our consciousness can make observations. Therefore the illuminated area of the heavens and the spatial extension of the mind are identical. Whatever the sun illuminates, if observed by any faculty of our living body, it can be conveyed to the mind by the recall of its appropriate name. If it has not already been named, the observer gives it a name in order to identify it later. Mind functions with the words put into it. A word illuminates a conceptual quality of the perceived object. Therefore word can also reach any part of the entire field illuminated by the sun and identified by the mind. The arousal of the functional aspect of the senses to relate with the objects of stimulation comes from the vital breath.

There have to be three principles jointly functioning within

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the empirical field of perception: 1) the illuminating light, 2) the conceptual meanings of words with which the mind is assembled, 3) the energy source for all the functional details both for engineering and maneuvering. In all three we can distinguish the causal factor as awareness and the effect as that state of awareness which is fed into the senses, the mind and the operating vital breath. The causal factor pertains to the Self and the effect to the physical world in which our own physical bodies are partial entities. At a given time and given space, our attention may be focused on anything which is illuminated that has the status of the specific or the particular with which we are intimately related. In our empirical cognitive role that gives us two possibilities. One is to think only of the relative or the specific. This limits the world. It also limits the role of the perceiver. The other possibility is to think of the universal whole to which all individuated experiences belong. From the finite we have a way of extending our perceptual interest into a universal world of which part is objectively understood and the rest conceptually appended. If the latter is our choice, our world becomes infinite and our role also changes from that of finite perceivers into infinite perceivers. This is what is pointed to by the twelfth mantra.

Mantra thirteen leads us to symbolically think of our bodies as being more subjected to environmental vicissitudes. We know that the ocean is made of water which fluctuates with surface waves. High tide and low tide are caused mainly by the moon. The moon has no light of its own; it borrows light from the sun. Similarly, the light of our intelligence is being communicated to our glandular system. God alone knows how many kinds of hormones and enzymes are accentuated or inhibited, especially when we move away from cortical functioning of the wakeful state to subcortical maneuvering in the dream state. The dream world is presided over by the moon. The mind in the dream world is not the empirical mind of the wakeful world. It is essentially structured out of memories conditioned with pleasure and pain, hope and fear, erotics and frustrations. In the area of the sun's illumination intelligence operates on sensory data where the mind suggests conceptual names for perceptual factors. In the world of dreams the affectivity of the lunar field of the mind is identical with the moon. The mind is not fixed to any particular objects. It draws on the conceptual qualities of objects which are stacked in the memory box of the subtle body through which

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dreams are generated.

There is an alternation in human life between the sunlit day to the lunar-afflicted night. The actuality of the day is lived with empirical validity while the fluctuating dream experience is lived on the waves of emotional ideas of subjectivity. The total person is fed with both these experiences. One factor which operates both in the work-a-day world of actuality and in the dream-away night of ideas is the vital breath which never takes a holiday. We can easily see what an elaborate engineering skill has gone into the making of the empirical world in terms of physical realities and physical devices, and into the subtleties of coordination and relation established in the world of the collective mind which functions both universally and specifically; universally for the species and specifically for the individual. In the world of subjectivity also a person can be absorbed in the limited world of dream experience and then come out of it, casting away its momentary impact on the mind. By putting together the memory of the wakeful life and the dream life one can think of the vastness of the world of awareness which stretches beyond time and space. One can meditate on the ultimate and the infinite and thus be benefited by an exercise in transcendence. Once having become established in that world of infinitude, one is free to choose to return to the relative, or switch back to the infinity of the Absolute.

Mantra 14

sa eṣa saṁvatsaraḥ prajāpatiḥ ṣoḍaśakalaḥ. tasya rātraya eva pañcadaśa kalāḥ. dhruvaivāsya ṣoḍaśī kalā; sa rātribhireva ca pūryate'pa ca kṣīyate; so'māvāsyām rātrimetayā ṣoḍaśyā kalayā sarvamidam prāṇabhṛdanupraviśya tataḥ prātarjāyate; tasmādetām rātrim prāṇabhṛtaḥ prāṇam na vicchindyāt, apikṛkalāsasya, etasyā eva devatāyā apacityai.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *eṣaḥ* - this; *prajāpatiḥ* - *prajāpati*; *saṁvatsaraḥ* - described as the year; *ṣoḍaśa-kalaḥ* - (is) of sixteen digits; *rātrayaḥ* - nights (the lunar days); *eva* - alone; *tasya*

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his; *pañcadaśa* - fifteen; *kalāḥ* - (are) digits; *asya* - his; *ṣoḍaśī* - sixteenth; *kalā* - digit; *dhruvā* - (is) fixed; *eva* - verily; *saḥ* - he; *rātrībhiḥ* - by nights (the lunar days); *eva* - alone; *āpūryate ca* - waxes; *apakṣīyate* - wanes; *ca* - and; *saḥ* - he; *amāvāsyām* - on the new-moon; *rātrim* - night; *etayā* - this; *ṣoḍaśyā kalayā* - by the sixteenth digit; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *prāṇabhṛt* - living (beings); *anupraviśya* - pervading; *tataḥ* - from there; *prātaḥ* - in the morning; *jāyate* - is born, reappears; *tasmāt* - therefore; *etasyāḥ eva devatāyāḥ* - of this very deity (the moon); *apacityai* - in honor; *etām rātrim* - on this night; *prāṇbhṛtaḥ* - of any living being; *prāṇam* - the life; *na* - not; *vicchindhyāt* - (one) should snatch; *kṛkalāsasya* - of a chameleon; *api* - even

This *prajāpati*, described as the year, has sixteen digits. The lunar days are his fifteen digits, and his sixteenth digit is verily fixed. He (as the moon) waxes and wanes through the lunar days. Through the above sixteenth digit he pervades all these living beings on the new-moon night, and arises from there in the morning. Therefore, in honor of this very deity, one should not, on this night, snatch the life of any living being, not even of a chameleon.

This mantra refers back to mantra seventeen of the fourth *brāhmaṇa*. In that mantra we read how the *prajāpati* felt that he was incomplete and wanted to become full or complete. Attaining fullness or completeness is called *pāñktam*. *Pāñktam* is having five factors filling a period of time to make oneself complete. The loneliness of being the single archetypal model of manifestation terrified *prajāpati*. He meditated on the loneliness and found it was irrational to be afraid when there was no one else. Harm can come only from another, but there was no other. That gave him a temporary sense of relief. Then he looked at his world. It consisted of the totality of his being which was identical with the heavens. This is similar to the sun filling all of space with its radiation. To exist alone and to be one without a second is indisputably the sovereignty of a being. One's sovereignty is not enjoyable unless it is shared by another. At this thought the

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prajāpati again became discontented with his aloneness. Truth cannot be the most covetable supreme value unless it is also expressive of love. So far he had only been the knower knowing knowledge. But he also needed to be the lover loving love. When he desired, he revealed the secret of creation. This *Upaniṣad* began with the sacrifice of the *aśva*, or horse. Unlike in earlier scriptures the *prajāpati* had no need for an animal to be brought before him and have its head cut off and thrown into a sacrificial fire. He had only to imagine. The horse was imaginary; the sacrifice was imaginary; the result was imaginary; and yet there was satisfaction in that imagination. *Prajāpati* imagined, "Let me both be the lover and the beloved." That increased the one-dimensional being into a two-dimensional being. The first dimension is to know, the second dimension is to express knowledge. The first dimension belongs to the mind and the second dimension belongs to the word. That is why it is said that creation is made with the word. In the Old Testament it is said that God the Creator, after having made man in his own image, breathed life into him. The *Upaniṣad* puts it in another way. When the *prajāpati* became both the lover and the beloved, the mind and the word, he impregnated the word with the spirit of his meaning through conceptualizations. Therefore pregnancy is even now called conception. When a husband and wife mate, another being is not brought from outside. The man condenses himself into his essence and deposits it in the receptivity of his beloved. The beloved consumes the lover's essence and with the breath of the beloved the offspring grows over the period of a year.

Now we have here three factors: the father, the mother and the offspring. We were told in an earlier section that when life comes to assume a social system, the system is to be based on the principle of being *(dharma)*, its intrinsic value *(artha)*, the desire to express the value *(kāma)*, and bringing the system to its ultimate fulfillment *(mokṣa)*. Between *artha* and *kāma* there arises the need to have instrumentation. In the embryonic growth of the fetus the futuristic intention of the growing fetus or person is equipped with appropriate instruments to carry out the fulfillment of desire. Hence the child develops year to year and gets a whole body with sensitive skin to touch, eyes to see, a tongue to taste, a nose to smell and hands which first enable the baby to cling to its mother and thus be dependent on others. Then they became the main instruments for various vocations. It also gets

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legs to stand on its own, to move freely and to walk away from all bondage. It develops a coordination between the ear and the larynx and vocal organ so that it can proclaim its existential identity. It has the excretory organs to keep it clean and ultimately, after the maturation of all the glandular systems, to procreate. This instrumentation extends to all the tools that a growing person can procure with wealth to live a full life. The person came to have dimensions: of the mind, of the word, of individuation, and of instrumentation. The fifth is the mind being reciprocally complemented with words and being assigned a manager by the vital forces. When a person engages in action, the light of the mind comes from the spirit and the dynamics of the spoken or written word comes through the combination of the reflected light of the mind and the *prāṇa*. In other words, the sun, the moon, and the vital energy are bracketed for the creation of the individual. The two functions of the individual are singing the *udgītha* and attaining immortality. These are the five factors *pañca pāṅkta*, in the *prajāpati*: father, mother, offspring, wealth, and ritual.

The triple principles of the sun, moon and life-giving breath are identified with the father, mother, and the offspring. The mother has an intermediary position between the father and offspring. The child is looked upon as the essence of the father which further grows into its ultimate form in the mother's nurturing womb. The offspring is also thought of as an organic extension of the mother. The material cause of individuation comes from the father and mother and all the biologic materials and incentives for the child which gather its genetic propensities while growing in the mother's womb. Hence father and mother and child taken together are the wealth of life. The offspring has to be a continuator of the family. The family is the most natural replication of the scheme of life which is proliferated by nature.

We have to think of a microcosmic nature and a macrocosmic nature. Macrocosmic nature includes in it heaven with all its luminaries, including the sun, and the earth with its manifold designs of geology, biology, sociology, psychology and biochemistry. The moon is looked upon as a satellite of earth. Putting all these together we have the macrocosm. The macrocosm is the infrastructure of the individuated person. In fact, the two cannot be separated. There is a universal scheme in which the multiverse of the heavens and the earth harmoniously function in accordance with a consistent law which can be mathematically pre-

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dicted. There is also scope for uncertainty such as the quirks in the functioning of an individuated personality. In the astrological setting, the period of individuation and the biological, biochemical, physiological and psychobiological perfection of the body are set within a period of one year *(samvatsara)*.

This year is metaphorical. The exact number of days is not relevant. In India, the lunar calendar is used for all astrological purposes. The calendar is a device of dividing time into twelve equal parts. It is easy to calculate from the new moon to the full moon and from the full moon to the new moon. Therefore in the lunar calendar, all months are of equal periods. On one side, the moon is connected with the sun and on the other with water. Here, special attention is given to the moon which is taken as a luminous principle for measurement. Its decline or waning from the full moon to the new moon is a time unit of sixteen days called *kalā*.

The altering phases of the moon show how in a lifetime one undergoes several ups and downs, physically and psychically, in health and in wealth. As human beings are essentially dependent on the world, they have to regulate their expectations in terms of the world order. Failure, distress and darkness are to be normally expected. These are not permanent because they can be followed by success, rejoicing and hope. The primordial model of manifestation wanted to have a counterpart and an offspring. Those roles were fulfilled by knowledge, effort and specific mode of creative operation. Such being the very foundation of individuated life, we can naturally expect the offspring to continue in the way in which the primordial being began. Life on earth is thus cyclically repetitive.

The sixteenth day of every lunar month is looked upon as an interlacing principle between the macrocosm and microcosm. That day there is a crossing-over. The individuated being neutralizes its specificity in the universal cosmic energies. The *Upaniṣad* recommends that that day be considered important and sacred for all living beings. Metaphorically any hurt given to a being on that day is said to amount to causing disharmony to the universe. It is said that even an unattractive and humble form of life like a chameleon should not be hurt on the sixteenth lunar day. In Vedic India ritualistic killing was allowed by scriptures but it is specifically mentioned in this mantra that even on the authority of scripture, no living being should be hurt. This con-

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tinues the theme of this *Upaniṣad* which began with denouncing animal sacrifice by referring to a horse sacrifice in which there was no horse, no benefit motivation, no priest and no killing. From this we should understand that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* marks the beginning of a new epoch which is obviously more noble and more profoundly spiritual in its philosophical outlook.

Mantra 15

yo vai sa samvatsaraḥ prajāpatiḥ ṣoḍaśakalaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamevamvitpuruṣaḥ; tasya vittameva pañcadaśa kalāḥ, ātmaivāsya ṣoḍaśī kalā, sa vittenaivā ca pūryate'pa ca kṣīyate; tadetannabhyam yadayamātmā, pradhirvittam; tasmādyadyapi sarvajyānim jīyate, ātmanā cejjīvati, pradhināgādityevāhuḥ.

Word Meanings

yaḥ - who (is); *vai* - verily; *saḥ* - that; *samvatsaraḥ* - described as the year; *ṣoḍaśakalaḥ* - having sixteen digits; *prajāpatiḥ* - *prajāpati; saḥ* - he; *ayam* - (is) this; *eva* - verily; *yaḥ* - who (is); *ayam* - this; *evamvit* - knowing this; *puruṣaḥ* - person; *vittam* - wealth (is); *eva* - indeed; *tasya* - his; *pañcadaśa* - fifteen; *kalāḥ* - digits; *ātmā* - (and) the body; *eva* - verily; *asya* - one's; *ṣoḍaśī* - sixteenth; *kalā* - digit; *saḥ* - one; *vittena* - by wealth; *eva* - indeed; *āpūryate ca* - waxes; *apakṣīyate* - wanes; *ca* - and; *yat* - which (is); *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - body; *tat* - that; *etat* - this; *nabhyam* - (is) corresponding to the hub (of a wheel); *vittam* - (and) wealth; *pradhiḥ* - the rim (and spokes); *tasmāt* - therefore; *yadi* - if; *api* - even; *sarva-jyānim* - a total loss; *jīyate* - (somebody) suffers; *ātmanā* - physically; *cet* if; *jīvati* - (one) lives; *pradhinā* - in respect of (rim-like) outfit; *eva* - only; *agāt* - (he) has lost; *iti* - this; *āhuḥ* - (people) say

That *prajāpati* who is described as the year and has six-

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teen digits is verily the person who knows thus. Wealth is such a one's fifteen digits, and the body the sixteenth digit. It is through wealth that one waxes and wanes. This body corresponds to the hub of a wheel, and wealth is the rim (etc). Therefore even if a person is shorn of everything, but lives physically, people say that one has been deprived only of one's outfit.

When we began the study of the manifestation of *prajāpati* we were taken through many phases. We commenced our study with two opposite principles challenging each other. The primary principle was the negative aspect of the Absolute described as fear. The existential basis of fear was hunger. Hunger brings death and therefore the fear was of death or destruction. On the plus or positive side of the Absolute, being appeared with a program of becoming. That was the food. Thus the first positive projection in the scheme of the Absolute was a self-preserving entity that was commissioned with the responsibility to defeat death and hunger again and again. This positive aspect is looked upon as a shining principle *(deva)*. The dark force of hunger and death was termed the *asura*, that which is devoid of light. Then came the contest between the *devas* and *asuras*, the positive and the negative aspects of the Absolute. The shining ones decided to sing praises through the different faculties such as of hearing. The dark ones foiled this attempt by mixing pure words with impure words. All the faculties were tried one after another. The *asuras* always defeated the *devas*. The last choice of the *devas* was the life breath *(prāṇa)* in the mouth and the *asuras* failed to pollute it. That is why we now say that all are known but the *prāṇa* is not known. It was inevitable that the *devas* and *asuras* live together. For all our senses there are bright elements such as auspicious forms to see, auspicious words to speak, etc. They are all *devas*. They have their counterparts - the inauspicious words we hear, the inauspicious sights we see, the inauspicious lies we speak. The prototype of the *prajāpati* replicated into multitudes and that generated the need for a system which can direct a society of many persons to live in harmony.

At that stage a hypothetical region was imagined where the shining ones live *(devaloka)*. Similarly, a dark world of the departed ones was projected *(pitṛloka)*. The third world was the

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world of here and now of human beings called *manuṣyaloka*. One attains to the world of the shining ones through meditation. One goes to the world of the departed ones by observing obligatory rites. One lives in this world by accepting family life and procreating. Thus we have three possible patterns of life. One is to continue in a family circle performing duties, procreating and maintaining our offspring by procuring wealth. Wealth is instrumentation which is to be utilized with appropriate action. The human world is based on the mutuality of the members of society where every relationship is to be maintained through action programs. These action programs amount to producing more wealth and spending it to get a further extension of life in the body. The other two possibilities are to go to the world of the departed where one can no longer be in one's body, or to go into the world of the spirit and to lose one's personal identity in the Absolute. Even after going into the world of the departed ones, one has to come back to the world of birth and death to work out his or her course for further purification and emancipation. Until that happens, one's lot is to be born again and again with a body. Ultimately one comes to the conclusion that only through the renunciation of the world of wealth *(artha)* and desire *(kāma)* can one come to liberation *(mokṣa)*. Thus, this mantra offers us guidelines on how to make a meaningful review of our life on earth.

Mantra 16

atha trayo vāva lokāḥ -- manuṣyalokaḥ pitṛloko devaloka itti; so'yam manuṣyalokaḥ putrenaiva jayyaḥ, nānyena karmaṇā; karmaṇā pitṛlokaḥ, vidyayā devalokaḥ; devaloko vai lokānām śreṣṭhaḥ, tasmādvidyām praśaṁsanti.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *trayaḥ* - three; *vāva* - only; *lokāḥ* - worlds (there are); *manuṣyalokaḥ* - the world of humans; *pitṛlokaḥ* - the world of the ancestors; *devalokaḥ* - the world of the gods; *itti* - namely; *saḥ* - that; *ayam* - this; *manuṣyalokaḥ putreṇa* by a child; *eva* - only; *jayyaḥ* - is attainable; *na* - not; *anyena* - by anything else -- *kar-*

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maṇā - by any rite (or meditation); *pitṛlokaḥ karmaṇa* - by rites; *devalokaḥ vidyayā* - by meditation; *lokānām* - of (these) worlds; *devalokaḥ vai* - verily; *śreṣṭhaḥ* - (is) the best; *tasmāt* - therefore; *vidyām* - meditation; *praśaṁsanti* - (they) praise

There are only three worlds - the world of humans, the world of the ancestors and the world of the gods. The world of humans is attainable only through a child, not by anything else such as rites; the world of the ancestors through rites; and the world of the gods through meditation. The world of the gods is indeed the best of the worlds. Therefore they praise meditation.

The creation myths or theories of creation of all religions start with an archetypal form which includes all subsequent elaborations. On one side the design of archetypal projection or creation is presented as a teleologic intelligence which continues its progressive evolution through several subsequent repetitions. For instance, in the Semitic model the spirit origin is looked upon as God, having the qualities of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. The essence of this being is given an opportunity for individuation. After the creation of the first person in the image of God in Genesis, the long hierarchy continued from Adam and Eve to the present day man and woman. Whatever faculties the original man and woman had are believed to be still possessed by present day men and women. In the place of the one we now have the innumerable, yet the present people are also considered to be of the image of God. In the Indian theory the relationship between the archetypal first being and the manifold proliferation which has now become the world is that of an intelligent being articulating itself through the fecundity of procreative nature *(prakṛti)*. The intelligence is still the same. Its instrumentation consists of the five basic elements - earth, water, fire, air, and ether - or, qualitatively, solidity, viscosity, fieriness, transparency and subtlety and mobility. They are represented by the materiality of the body which is so infused with the brilliance and articulating intelligence of the spirit that instead of the concept of the spirit dwelling in a physical body, we have the concept of a

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psychosomatic instrumentation.

Although for convenience three worlds are speculated as having separate existence or jurisdiction in this verse, we have to think of the three as belonging to one. In Christian theology there is the triad of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although three separate entities are mentioned, they are to be taken as one. An ordinary religious person thinks that God is in heaven, beyond the cloud, nature is down-to-earth where the dark spirits live in a nether world, and the individual spirit is imprisoned in the individual body. These are the allowances made for the frailties of an undisciplined mind. Otherwise a true believer thinks of the Kingdom of God as abiding in one's heart. So the Word of God is not far; it is in the heart of the individual. This is not the physical heart, but the heart of one's belief or faith. Ultimately there are three separate functions interlinked within the ambit of one's consciousness. This consciousness is pure intelligence represented by the pure spirit which deals with first principles and has a scientific precision where the fundamental is taken as the basis for judgement. In Semitic religions this is seen as the father and in the Upaniṣadic parlance it is called the *devaloka.*

The second world, termed here as the *pitṛloka,* is the world of memory. We live an experience, but when time runs out, even what happened only a few seconds ago moves away from the present to the past. Then our recall of it takes us to the dead and buried experience. Right here in our hearts there are the buried experiences of prior moments. When a man deposits his essence in a woman's womb, she keeps it for about a year. Similarly, any concept that is formulated in the light of intelligence is kept as a replica or concept to the very end of one's life. When we look at the formation of a concept, we can see that there is a gradual change from the first impression. Every concept is sculpted out of the light of intelligence that has fallen on it and the psychosomatic medium in which memory is retained. Thus the *pitṛloka* is not to be seen as the world of the dead. It is the world of memory where dynamic conceptualization goes on and full justice is given to the psychosomatic processing *(saṁskāras)* being received from moment to moment in the course of life.

In one case the pure light of reason remains as a theoretic starting point. In the second the same is held in another frame of reference with many purposive and teleological correlations and coordinations continuously operating in the evolutionary

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field. The ultimate effect is to be expressed through the action/reaction patterns of the individuated being which is treated here as the offspring. What is passed on to us as a mythical metaphor or ideogram holds within it a scheme of unitive understanding: cognition belongs to the father, connation belongs to the mother, and affection belongs to the child. Only with such an elaboration of this mantra can it yield any worthwhile significance. The mystic language of the *Upaniṣad* is to be rendered into the tongue of modern man. The *lingua mystica* is to be presented as *lingua scientifique*.

Mantra 17

athātaḥ samprattiḥ - yadā praiṣyanmanyate'tha putramāh, tvam brahma, tvam yajñaḥ, tvam loka iti; sa putraḥ pratyāh, aham brahma, aham yajñaḥ, aham loka iti; yadvai kiñcānūktam tasya sarvasya brahmetyekatā. ye vai ke ca yajñāsteṣām sarveṣām yajña ityekatā; ye vai ke ca lokāsteṣām sarveṣām loka ityekatā; etāvadvā idam sarvam; etanmā sarvam sannayamito'bhunajaditi, tasmāt putramanuśiṣṭam lokyamāhuḥ,tasmādenamanuśāsati; sa yadaivamvidasmāllokātpraiti, athaibhireva prāṇaiḥ saha putramāviśati. sa yadyanena kiñcidakṣṇayā'kṛtam bhavati, tasmādenam sarvasmātputro muñcati, tasmātputro nāma; sa putreṇaivāsminlloke pratitiṣṭhati, athainamete daivāḥ prāṇā amṛtā āviśanti.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *ataḥ* - therefore; *samprattiḥ* - transfer (of duties); *yadā* - when; *praiṣyan* - (that one is) going to die; *manyate* - (one) thinks; *atha* - then; *putram* - to the progeny; *āha* - (one) says; *tvam* - you; *brahma* - (are) *brahman*; *tvam yajñaḥ* (are) the sacrifice; *tvam* - you; *lokaḥ* - (are) the world *iti*; *saḥ* - that; *putraḥ* - progeny; *pratyāh* - answers; *aham* - I; *brahma* - (am) *brahman*; *aham* - I; *yajñaḥ* - the sacrifice; *aham* - I; *lokaḥ* - the world *iti*; (the parent means:) *yat vai kiṁ ca* - whatever; *anūktam* - study (there is); *tasya sarvasya* - of all that; *brahma iti* -

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in the word *'brahman'*; *ekatā* - (there is) oneness; *ye vai ke ca* - whatever; *yajñaḥ* - sacrifices (are there); *teṣām sarveṣām* - of them all; *yajñaḥ iti* - in the word 'sacrifice'; *ekatā* - oneness; *ye vai ke ca* - whatever; *lokāḥ* - worlds (are there); *teṣām sarveṣām* - of them all; *lokaḥ iti* - in the word 'world'; *ekatā* - oneness; *idam sarvam* - all this (householder's duties); *etāvat* - (is) so much; *vai* - just; *ayam* - one; *etat* - this; *sarvam* - all; *san* - being identified with; *mā* - me; *itaḥ* - from (the obligations of) this world; *abhunajat* - will save *iti*; *tasmāt* - therefore; *anuśiṣṭam* - instructed; *putram* - a progeny; *lokyam* - as leading to worlds; *āhuḥ* - (they) speak of; *tasmāt* - hence; *enam* - one; *anuśāsati* - instructs; *evamvit* - one who knows thus; *yadā* - when; *asmāt lokāt* - from this world; *praiti* - departs; *atha* - then; *saḥ* - one; *ebhiḥ* - these; *eva* - very; *prāṇaiḥ* - organs; *saḥ* - with; *putram* - (one's) progeny; *āviśati* - penetrates; *yadi* - if; *anena* - by one; *akṣṇayā* - through some loophole; *kiñcit* - anything; *akṛtam bhavati* - has been omitted; *tasmāt sarvasmāt* - from all that; *saḥ* - that; *putraḥ* - the progeny; *enam* - one; *muñcati* - releases; *tasmāt* - therefore; *putraḥ* - progeny (one who saves from omissions); *nāma* - (is) called; *saḥ* - one; *putreṇa* - through progeny; *eva* - alone; *asmin loke* - in this world; *pratitiṣṭhati* - remains; *atha* - then; *ete* - these; *daivāḥ* - divine; *amṛtāḥ* - immortal; *prāṇāḥ* - organs (speech, mind and vital force); *enam* - one; *āviśanti* - pervade

Now, therefore, the transfer (of duties): When one thinks one is going to die, one says to one's progeny, "You are *brahman*, you are the sacrifice, you are the world." The progeny answers, "I am *brahman*, I am the sacrifice, I am the world." (The parent means:) "Whatever study there is, is all summed up in the word *'brahman'*. Whatever sacrifices there are, are all summed up in the word 'sacrifice'. And whatever worlds there are, are all summed up in the word 'world'. All this (householder's duties) is just so much. My progeny, by identifying with all this, will save me from (the obligations of) this world." Therefore they speak of an instructed progeny as leading to worlds. Hence one instructs one's progeny. When one

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who knows as above leaves this world, one penetrates one's progeny together with speech, the mind and the vital force. If any duty has been omitted by one through any loophole, the progeny releases one from all that omission. Therefore progeny is called *putram* (one who saves from omissions). One remains in this world through the progeny alone. The divine and immortal speech, mind and vital force pervade one.

The meaning of a person's life is called *puruṣārtha*. In this context, "meaning" is the goal that one seeks. The ultimate goal of life is liberation. In Indian philosophy the four prime goals or meanings are: the intrinsic law of life *(dharma)*; the instrumentation or aid to carry out the unfoldment of *dharma (artha)*; the dynamic direction of energy for the achievement of one's desire or motivation *(kama)*; and total liberation from all obligatory bondages that are impressed as colorations or conditionings acquired in the course of life *(mokṣa)*. All these are considered to be the benefit one gets by assuming a body and living in this world.

Three factors are referred to as relevant to one's life between birth and death. Cosmologically they are the sun, the moon and the earth. Psychologically they are symbolized by the word, the mind and the vital breath. They are actualized in the form of the father, the mother and the progeny. The moon has no light without the sun, so they are bracketed together. The wife and husband are bracketed. The father and mother together cause the creation of the child. Therefore the parents are the cause and the child is the effect. All three categories aid each other. Therefore each one is wealth to the other.

In the bipolar relationship between the parents and child, the law of reciprocation operates. The father donates the seed and the mother nurtures it into the progeny and together they nourish and educate the child until he or she becomes a young person. Then the table is turned. The grown-up children are expected to take care of their aging parents. That is the law of reciprocation in life. Between husband and wife there is complementarity. Between the parent and child there is reciprocity. Between old age and youthfulness or maturity and babyhood, there is contradiction. Birth and death cancel out each other. The father stands for the *ṛg*, the mother stands for the *yajus* and

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the progeny stands for the *sāma*.

When a person is about to die, one is going back to oneself. One's progeny is none other than oneself. It was through the parents' instruction or word that the progeny became initiated into *brahman*. So the parent says: "You are *brahman*." It was with the parents' sacrifice the progeny was generated. So the parent says: "You are the sacrifice." The parents have come to the world of human social life to actualize their *dharma* and it is through their progeny that they are fulfilling it in the world. Therefore they say: "You are the world."

In reciprocation the progeny accept that they are *brahman*, knowing that their parents, teachers and others are in them as their memory. So the progeny says: "I am *brahman*." The libation of the father's seed, having been sacrificed into the sacrificial pit of the mother's womb, has generated the progeny. The sacrifices were done by the parents and the progeny becomes the fruition of the *karma* that was collectively done. So one says: "I am the sacrifice." Natural progeny marks the end result of the parents coming to this world, so the progeny says: "I am the world."

Meaning *(artha)* is the instrumentation for the fulfillment of whatever intention is in the triple aspects of life: father, mother and progeny. The father's and mother's inability or forgetfulness might have caused some hitch in the fulfillment of their lives. Just as the parents were kind to the child, the child becomes kind to the parents and exonerates them. He or she fulfills whatever was omitted by the parent. The purpose of life is adequately met and fulfilled in the course of the parents' and the progeny's life. This mantra thus rounds off the symmetry of life in a perfect and harmonious order.

Mantra 18

pṛthivyai cainamagneśca daivī vāgāviśati; sā vai daivī vāgyayā yadyadeva vadati tattadbhavati.

Word Meanings

pṛthivyai ca - from the earth; *agneḥ* - from fire; *ca* - and; *daivī* - divine; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *enam* - one;

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āviśati - pervades; *sā* - that (is); *vai* - verily; *daivī* - divine; *vāk* - speech; *yayā* - by which; *yat yat eva* - whatever; *vadati* (one) says; *tat tat* - all that; *bhavati* - comes to pass

The divine speech from the earth and fire pervades one. That is the divine speech by which whatever one says comes to pass.

At the time of the approach of death to the parents, if the parents are convinced that the child has been living in accordance with their expectations the child is approved as qualified to fulfill the desires of the parents. In that case the progeny is said to have the divine quality of *saṁpratiṣṭh*.

If water is not surrounded by any limiting obstruction, it easily flows in all directions. Fire also spreads wherever it is not prevented. Similarly a person who has good will to others is not obstructed. The compassion of such a person is boundless. He or she does not prefer one to another. Such a person becomes a recipient of the grace of the divine. From the earth he or she receives the unshakable firmness of truth and is conveyed to the eternal realms of truth by fire, gaining intuitive insight. When these graces are given to one, truth spontaneously sits in one's organ of speech. Effortlessly one speaks truth and nothing obscures one's transparency of vision. When he or she speaks, even if others do not see the truth or relevance of what is said, it comes to pass. Such a person has no discord and wishes only good to others. His or her words will only benefit others. Thus such a person becomes a friend of the world.

Mantra 19

divaścainamādityācca daivam mana āviśati; tadvai daivam mano yenānandyeva bhavati, atho na śocati

Word Meanings

divaḥ ca - from heaven; *ādityāt* - from the sun; *ca* - and;

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daivam - divine; *manaḥ* - the mind; *enam* - him; *āviśati* - pervades; *tat* - that (is); *vai* - verily; *daivam* - divine; *manaḥ* - mind; *yena* - by which; *ānandī* - joyful; *eva* - only; *bhavati* - (one) becomes, *atho* - and; *na* - not; *śocati* - grieves

The divine mind from heaven and the sun pervades one. That is the divine mind by which one becomes only joyful and never grieves.

A dutiful child, duly appreciated by the parents for acts of reverence and love, the fulfillment of the parents' desires and amendments of the parents' lapses, is so very blessed that the grace of the heavens will always wait upon such a one. One's mind will be so pure that one will have easy intercourse with the blessed spheres of the heavens. One's cheerful disposition will be made more joyful with divine grace. One will never resort to any negativity in one's thoughts and will not be subjected to any grief.

Mantra 20

adbhayaścainam candramaśca daivaḥ prāṇa āviśati sa vai daivaḥ prāṇo yaḥ sañcaraṁścāsañcaraṁśca na vyathate, atho na riṣyati; sa evamvitsarveṣām bhūtānāmātmā bhavati; yathaiṣā devataivam saḥ; yathaitām devatām sarvāṇi bhūtānyavanti, evam haivamvidam sarvāṇi bhūtānyavanti. yadu kiñcemāḥ prajāḥ śocanti, amaivāsām tadbhavati, puṇyamevāmum gacchati, na ha vai devān pāpam gacchati.

Word Meanings

adbhayaḥ ca - from water; *candramasaḥ* - from the moon; *ca* - and; *daivaḥ* - divine; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *enam* - one; *āviśati* - pervades; *saḥ* - that (is); *vai* - verily; *daivaḥ* - divine; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *yaḥ* - which; *sañcaran ca* - moving; *asañcaran* - not moving; *ca* - and; *na* - not; *vyathate* - suffers; *atho* - also; *na* - not; *riṣyati* -

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perishes; *evamvit* - who knows thus; *saḥ* - one; *sarveṣām bhūtānām* - of all beings; *ātmā* - the Self; *bhavati* - becomes; *yathā* - as; *eṣā* - (is) this; *devatā* - deity *(hiraṇyagarbha)*; *evam* - so; *saḥ* - (is) one; *yathā* - as; *sarvāṇi* - all; *bhūtāni* - beings; *etām* - this; *devatām* - deity; *avanti* - protect, worship; *evam* - so; *ha* - indeed; *sarvāṇi* - all; *bhūtani* - beings; *evaṁvidam* - one who knows thus; *avanti* - protect, worship; *imāḥ* - these; *prajāḥ* - beings; *yat u* - anything; *kiṁ ca* - whatever; *śocanti* - grieve for; *āsām* - of these; *tat* - that; *amā* - with (them); *eva* - indeed; *bhavati* - is; *puṇyam* - good; *eva* - only; *amum* - to (such a knower); *gacchati* - goes; *pāpam* - evil; *devānam* - to the gods; *na* - not; *ha vai* - ever; *gacchati* - goes

The divine vital force from water and the moon pervades one. That is the divine vital force which, moving or not moving, neither suffers nor perishes. One who knows thus becomes the Self of all beings. As is this deity *(hiraṇyagarbha)*, so is one. As all beings worship this deity, so do they worship one who knows thus. Whatever grief these beings suffer from is indeed joined to them. But only good (result) goes to one. Evil (result) never goes to the gods.

In this mantra we get a description of the all-embracing Self which is at once the animating principle of all individual beings and the collective animation that permeates the corporate totality of manifestation. The primal cause of the universe is described as having in it two principles. One is the encompassing phenomena called *hiraṇyagarbha* which was originally referred to as the hunger that induced the manifestation of its counterpart, the life-propagating principle described as *prajāpati*. *Hiraṇyagarbha* is the negative principle which yet has in it the promise of hope.

The fragmentary and individualistic details of the universe are knit into a mutually correlated and coordinated whole. The unifying factor is here given as the divine vital force of water and the moon. The moon is the mind or psyche that perpetuates the consciousness of life as if in a dream. The vital force spoken of

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here has the quality of sustaining all the active parts of the universe as well as the static entities without being affected by the change or decay of the entities in which the *prāṇa* and consciousness function.

If you look at an individual who is exposed to the dual principles of pain and pleasure, even when acute pain is experienced in any part of the body, there is a witnessing consciousness which is looking on realizing that the phenomena of pain is there. However, that consciousness has in it no pain of its own. It is like a friend or relative who is sitting close by and watching the phenomena of another's suffering. That aspect of *prāṇa* which, as a neutral principle, maintains a body in its states of both happiness and suffering is said to be the divine vital force which represents *hiraṇyagarbha*, the collective principle of phenomenality.

The conjunction of parts is exposed to the duality of pain and pleasure and the organism that is sustained by phenomenality suffers, but that suffering is not conjoined to the *sarvātmā*, the Self of all. In the course of the changes that occur in the phenomenal, birth and death can happen, one can flourish or perish. Such things come to pass as part and parcel of the nature of phenomenality. Seasonal changes come to a tree - leaves and flowers come in the spring, then the flowers droop and fall off, and seeds or fruits come into being, then, in the fall, both leaves and fruits are dropped, leaving the tree naked in winter. Leaves and flowers will come again as a cyclic phenomena. The vitality of the world is not affected by the withering of a particular tree or the perishing of an individual person or a particular animal, bird or insect. It has an ongoing program of substituting new forms of life for the perished ones. In spite of the recurring death that is cyclically devastating to this or that fragment of life or the individual that faces pain and pleasure, birth and death, it is not to be considered as a tragedy to which the universal soul *(sarvātmā)* is exposed.

The green grass or other vegetation in a certain area may begin to perish in the summer heat but it comes to life again with the showering of another rain. Water goes into the roots which preserve in them a spark of life. They sprout new leaves and green the whole area as if nothing happened in the summer. This phenomena is described in the mantra as *deva prāṇa*, divine vital energy. It enters into living beings like a spirit possessing them. Similarly, the psychic phenomena which knits together the whole

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world in the dream of life may go into degrees of unconsciousness and then return to consciousness. This is said to be like the lunar energy taking possession of the mind. The apparent losses of life such as the loss of energy or loss of consciousness are not to be sorrowed over. Those who know the continuity of the cyclic aspect of life and the alternating states of animated dynamics and suspended animation will not grieve over phenomenal changes. Origin, existence and dissolution are the sequential aspects of phenomena. So childhood, youth, middle age and old age with disease and death are only to be expected. Even when the dark and dismal picture is shown for a short time by *hiraṇyagarbha, prajāpati* will come back, assuming a fresh aspect of life or a new body.

Śankara poses the question: "Since the universal *prāṇa* and universal psyche is an inner state of the individual who suffers and perishes, will it not also be afflicted by the individual's painful experience or death?" To this he answers: "No it will not be." The universal Self is to be recognized as different from the fragmentary phenomena which is experienced by the individual body and mind. The explanation that Śankara gives is very pertinent here. It is those that identify themselves with limited objects who are afflicted by sorrow when, for instance, the objects are abused by someone. But the sage who is the Self of all has no particular notion of identity with either the object that is abused or the agency that abuses. He or she cannot therefore be miserable on that account. There is also no grounds for sorrow in the case of someone's death. When somebody dies and a man feels miserable, thinking that he was his son or brother, the grief is due to this relationship. Where this cause is absent, one may witness that death but will not be afflicted. Similarly, this divine being, who is not identified with limited things and has no defects such as false notions about 'mine' or 'yours', and so on, which lead to misery, is not affected by it.

Śankara asks still another question. "It is a fact that we individuals suffer when we are exposed to the various tragedies of life which occur to us or to one of our relatives. How is that to be accounted for?" Śankara explains this as follows: the personal mind of an individual is like a person's private affair. Within one's mind there are many transactions which have only local significance in time and space. The only vital link between the universal Self and the individual self is that of providing the ne-

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cessary vital energy and the mind stuff for the individual to sustain his or her physical and psychic life for the duration of his or her life span. The laws which mostly govern an individual's life are of psychophysical, biologic and psychochemical significance and also of individual psychic conditioning. If an individual violates any of these laws, one is bound to suffer the consequences in one's personal life. But the universal Self remains aloof and unaffected.

Mantra 21

athāto vratamīmāṁsā; prajāpatirha karmāṇi sasṛje, tāni sṛṣṭānyanyonyenāspardhanta - vadiṣyāmyevāhamitti vāgdadhre, drakṣyāmyahamitti cakṣuḥ, śrosyamyahamitti śrotram, evamanyāni karmāṇi yathākarma; tāni mṛtyuḥ sramo bhūtvopayeme, tānyāpnot, tānyāptvā mṛtyuravārundha; tasmācchrāmyatyeva vāk, śrāmyati cakśuḥ, śramyati śrotram; athemameva nāpnodyo'yam madhyamaḥ prāṇaḥ, tāni jñātum dadhrire. ayam vai naḥ śreṣṭho yaḥ sañcaraṁścāsañcaraṁśca na vyathate, atho na riṣyati, hantāsyaiva sarve rūpamasāmeti; ta etasyaiva sarve rūpamabhavan, tasmādeta etenākhyāyante prāṇā iti; tena ha vāva tatkulamācakṣate yasminkule bhavati ya evam veda; ya u haivamvidā spardhate'nuśuṣyati, anuśuṣya haivāntato mriyata ityadyātmam.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *ataḥ* - therefore; *vrata-mīmāṁsā* - discussion of the vow; *prajāpatiḥ* - *prajāpati, virāj; ha* - so goes the story; *karmāṇi* - the organs; *sasṛje* - created; *tāni* - these; *sṛṣṭāni* - being created; *anyonyena* - with one another; *aspardhanta* - competed; *aham* - I; *vadiṣyāmi* - will speak; *eva* - only; *iti* - this; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *dadhre* - resolved; *aham* - I; *drakṣyāmi* - will see; *iti* - this; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye; *aham* - I; *śroṣyāmi* - will hear; *iti* - this; *śrotram* - the ear; *evam* - so; *anyāni* - other; *karmāṇi* - organs (did); *yathākarma* - according to (their) functions; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *śramaḥ* - exhaustion; *bhūtvā* -

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being; *tāni* - them; *upayeme* - seized; *tāni* - them; *āpnot* - overtook; *tāni* - them; *āptvā* - having overtaken; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *avārundha* - restrained; *tasmāt* - therefore; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *śrāmyati eva* - does get tired; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye; *śrāmyati* - gets tired; *śrotram* - the ear; *śrāmyati* - gets tired; *atha* - but; *ayam* - this; *yaḥ* - which (is); *madhyamaḥ* - in the midst of the body; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *imam* - that; *eva* - verily; *na* - not; *āpnot* - (death) overtook; *tāni* - they; *jñātum* - to know (it); *dadhṛire* - resolved; *ayam* - this; *vai* - verily; *naḥ* - among us; *śreṣṭhaḥ* - (is) the foremost; *yaḥ sañcaran ca asañcaran ca na vyathate, atho na riṣyati* - (as before); *hanta* - well; *sarve* - all; *asya* - its; *eva* - alone; *rūpam* - form; *asāma* - let (us) become; *iti* - (they thought); *te* - they; *sarve* - all; *etasya* - its; *eva* - alone; *rūpam* - form; *abhavan* - became; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ete* - they; *etena* - by its name; *prāṇāḥ - prāṇas; iti ākhyāyante* - are called; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; (*saḥ* - one); *yasmin kule* - in which family; *bhavati* - is born; *tat* - that; *kulam* - family; *tena* - by one's name; *ha vāva* - certainly; *ācakṣate* - (people) designate; *yaḥ u ha* - and whoever; *evamvidā* - with one who knows thus; *spardhante* - competes; *anuśuṣyati* - withers; *anuśuṣya* - after withering; *anantaḥ* - at the end; *mṛiyate* - dies; *ha eva* - certainly; *iti* - this; *adhyātmam* - (is) with reference to the body

Now, therefore, a discussion about the vow: *prajāpati (virāj)* created the organs. These after being created competed with one another. The organ of speech resolved, "I will go on speaking." The eye: "I will see." The ear: "I will hear." So did the other organs according to their functions. Death seized them in the form of exhaustion. It overtook them and, having overtaken them, restrained them. Therefore the vocal organ gets tired. So does the eye; and so does the ear. But death could not overtake the vital force in the body. The other organs resolved to know it. "This verily is the foremost among us that, moving or not moving, neither suffers nor perishes. Well, let us all assume its form alone." They all assumed its form alone. Hence they are called by its name of *prāṇa*. People certainly designate that family in which is born one

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who knows thus, by the name of that person, and whoever competes with one who knows thus withers, and after withering certainly dies at the end. This is (meditation) with reference to the body.

This mantra presents the implications of the assignments given to each structural part of the organism. *Vrata* means the determination to carry out a pledge. *Mīmāṁsā* means the logistics of that pledge. *Vrata mīmāṁsā* is the logistics of the functional verity of the comprehensive structure of an organism. In every structure two opposite laws are put together for functional efficiency - freedom and control. The life principle is constituted of a voluntary system and an autonomous system. The autonomous system acts as control and the voluntary system works out maximum freedom within a structural composition. Most of the autonomous systems are controlled by reflexes which are biologically acquired or structurally instituted.

Certain functions have precedence over certain other functions. For structural stability, concrete body structures are helpful. However for dynamic functioning, subtle operations are carried out by energies issuing out of chemical compositions, electrical functions and built-in pressures manipulated by gaseous agents. This paradoxical situation is expressed in the second principle of thermodynamics, according to which entropy tends to become zero. If that were true, no solid state could be maintained. So the scientist had to invent a negative factor to counter entropy, called negentropy. Two opposite principles are juxtaposed.

In the present *mantra* it is metaphorically said that various functional agents acquired a certain kind of compulsion requiring the mutual reciprocation of the operations of opposites in which the mechanical function is interlaced with mentation based on several values such as economic viability, efficiency and alternating modes. There is a reference to this notion in the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* in which the vital breath in the human context and electromagnetics and thermodynamics in the cosmic context are poetically conceived as being instituted by a mythical agent called *mātariśvan*.

When we look at the functional efficiency of the senses and organs of action, both the release and control of parts involved in

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a organism are manipulated by the channeling of energy. In the mechanical world, electrical energy is used for a number of purposes like heating, cooling, magnetizing, rotating, revolving, etc. The functional efficiency and purposiveness of the vital breath also manifests in a variety of ways. The human body functions very much like a factory. It has a fireplace and a cooling system to balance its temperature.

In the present mantra the contradictions in the functional modes of the various senses are presented like in a psychodrama. The interdependence between the articulation of speech, the respiration of vital breath, concentration of the eye on the details of vision and the infusing of word efficiency into the ear are all presented as if the interdisciplinary reciprocation between these were arrested for a time. The student is given an occasion to make an analysis of his or her functional faculties and is asked to find the means by which all parts can be cogently coordinated. Each organ becomes something like a regional supervisor for the mind that works in conjunction with the sensory and organic functioning of the individual. Ultimately the individual comes to a consciousness that all manifestations have come from a common origin. Hence it is shown how one has to achieve a unitive vision to make oneself centrally active and mutually aiding.

Just as all members of a great person's family are collectively held as belonging to him or her, all the senses are said to belong to the family of the *prāṇa*. Functionally each part has its assignment and there has to be a continuous liaison between one part and another for harmonious operation. This mantra conveys the basic idea of a functional government or a working principle of a family. At one pole are the parts that come into being such as infants that are slowly getting into the training ground of life. At the other pole is the withering away of parts which are worn out. Life is a program in which birth and death, growth and decay, are dialectically in balance. Insight into the inner structure, infrastructure and metafunction of organisms will give us a very valuable key to live amicably with others as well as to make our own lives purposively meaningful.

Mantra 22

athādhidaivatam - jvaliṣyāmyevāhamityagnirddadhre,

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tapsyāmyahamitīyādityaḥ, bhāsyāmyahamiti candramāḥ, evamanyā devatā yathādaivatam; sa yathaiṣām prāṇānām madhyamaḥ prāṇaḥ, evametāsām devatānām vāyuḥ; mlocantī hyanyā devatāḥ, na vāyuḥ; saiṣānastamitā devatā yadvāyuḥ.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *adhidaivatam* - with reference to the participation of the shining ones (in the function of the manifested world); *aham* - I; *jvaliṣyāmi* - will burn; *eva* - only; *iti* - this; *agniḥ* fire; *dadhre* - resolved; *aham* - I; *tapsyāmi* - will heat; *iti* - this; *ādityaḥ* - the sun; *aham* - I; *bhāsyāmi* - will shine; *iti* - this; *candramāḥ* - the moon; *evam* - so; *anyāḥ* - other; *devatāḥ* - shining ones; *yathādaivatam* - according to (their) divine functions; *eṣām prāṇānām* - among these organs; *yathā* - as; *saḥ* - (is) that; *madhyamaḥ* - in the midst of the body; *prāṇaḥ* - vital force; *evam* - so; *etāsām devatānām* - of these shining ones; *vāyuḥ* - (is) *vāyu; anyāḥ* - other; *devatāḥ* - deities; *mlocanti* - droop, stop functioning; *na* - not; *vāyuḥ* - *vāyu; yat* - which (is); *vāyuḥ* - *vāyu; sā* - that; *esā* - this; *devatā* - deity; *anastamitā* - never sets

Now, with reference to the participation of the shining ones in the function of the manifested world: fire resolved, "I will go on burning;" the sun, "I will heat;" the moon, "I will shine." So did the other shining ones resolve according to their divine functions. As the vital force in the body is among these organs, so is *vāyu* among the shining ones, for other shining ones droop, but *vāyu* does not. It is *vāyu* which is the shining one that never sets.

In understanding this mantra we should go back to the earlier *brāhmaṇas* in which the shining ones (the *devas)* and the dark ones (the demons or *asuras*) were clearly presented as none other than the two modes of functioning within the primeval entity *(prajāpati)*, the archetype of a living organism. According to the

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Upaniṣads, the world is self-born. The main principle of growth and proliferation is invested in the relationship between cause and effect. A seed causes a sprout and roots. The sprout and roots cause the formation of the sapling. The sapling causes the elaboration of a tree that in its turn brings forth flowers which are causally connected with fruits. The fruit comes from the seed in turn and the seed is again the cyclic cause for another round of projection. This is mythically presented in this *Upaniṣad* by the *prajāpati*. When there was only *prajāpati*, both the principles of the shining ones and the dark ones were within that archetype. When the *prajāpati* swelled into a man and woman which projected out of them all the species of living beings, the one living being became the society of living beings.

The one mind which was in *prajāpati* became spread out in all living beings. The collective mind in which the shining one exists is metaphorically called the *deva loka*. The shining one is to be seen both within ourselves and also without. The eye is given the status of the seer or inner illuminator and the sun is considered to be the illuminator of the cosmic world. Similarly, the principle of imaging in the heart corresponds to the light of the moon that affects both the element water and the emotional life of living beings.

These metaphors are further applied in formulating a system with three strata - name, form and function. The first stratum is the heavens where we see the luminaries like the sun. The second stratum is the atmosphere connected with the biosphere. The third stratum is the earth with firm ground girdled by the oceans. Thus we have a cosmological world, a psychological world, and a psychophysical world. There is also a subterranean or secret origin of life which is traced with the special devices of biochemistry, psychochemistry, and biophysics. These devices are partly composed of gadgets like electron microscopes and partly of mathematical logic by which approximations can be made.

It is interesting to study the evolution of the sun and to see the same pattern of evolution in the terrestrial world and in the origin of life and consciousness. The seers of the *Upaniṣad* give primacy to the mind by imagining it to be a spirit principle which from the outset became the primordial problem-solving device. That is why at the very beginning of the second *brāhmaṇa*, genesis commences with all-pervading hunger which found its coun-

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terpart in the projection of food or fuel. After the presentation of an almost total picture of the fully manifested world with living organisms and social development we are asked in this mantra to focus on the purposiveness of the structural composition in which every function is adequately correlated with the total engineering of the universe. To take a small example, when the sun illuminates the world it emanates reflected rays and refracted rays which fill the entire world of vision. From human beings to the simplest living organisms fitted with visual organs, all see their respective areas of interest as clearly as possible. For each one the world image is reduced to fit into their organic equipment. It is as if the sun, the illuminator of the world, has a deep interest in all percipient beings being facilitated by the images of their environmental factors. At whatever level an onlooking eye is placed and whatever the size of the object illuminated, the reflected rays from it will converge to a single point of focus in the lens of every respective eye. The more we think about it, we are amazed to see that in this universe not even a bacteria falls outside the total purpose in which everything is a participant, consciously or unconsciously.

The unknown and unconscious areas implied in the world engineering are amazingly many times greater and larger than what we judge to be the purpose of the universal structure. Although the sun is the grand illuminator of our earth, it is the revolution of earth on its axis which allows every part of the earth to be benefited by the light of the sun. Each point which can be marked around the equator is at once a point of sunrise and sunset. All living beings are benefited by this arrangement. The main properties of the sun and fire are more or less the same. Fire burns its fuel and radiates heat and light. The sun is also a self-consuming body of gases which benefits the world through an act of self-immolation. Like the sun which periodically shines on different parts of the world, the fire of hunger arises in the pit of one's stomach, burns food which is its fuel, and then goes into slumber, only to be awakened again. Thus the comparison between the sun and the fire of hunger is apt. We also see the fire of truth which manifests in the form of words. The articulation of a word is like a logical fire of consciousness burning with the energy of our vital force *(prāṇa)*. Like the sun, the word also has only an intermittent function.

The most interesting metaphor given in this mantra is of the

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moon. Like the actual moon which draws its light from the sun, the heart draws its inspiration from the information data derived from cerebration and the cognizing faculty of the intellect to make images for the future. The imagination of the heart is called *kalpana* which is connected with *kalpa*, the Indian concept of time. *Kalpa* is divided into ages *(yugas)* which are again divided into cosmic years and further divided into solar years, solar months, solar days and moments. A mental image may live only for a few moments. But it marks the beginning and end of a period of time. That event happens in a spatial location. Thus human beings become continuous observers of the universe both in its macro aspect as well as in its micro aspect.

Although all elements have only a periodic significance in life, air cannot have any interruption in the role assigned to it because it is the energizing principle both in the general function of the universe as well as in the special operation that is assigned to every part of the cell life of an organism. A most interesting study is an in-depth probe into the varieties of energies at work in the magnificent theater of life. This is particularly so when we look into the evolution from an idea to the formation of slimy liquids in living bodies to the engineering of a whole human being from a droplet of semen out of the testicle of a man and an ovum from a woman. This mucus is called *kapha* or *śleṣma* in Sanskrit. *Śleṣma* means cuddling or holding together. It comes from the root *śleṣa* which means two or twin. When the male and female counterparts come together, *śleṣa* holds them. The Sanskrit term *kapha* means what is protective *(ka* means what; *pha* is related with *bhan*, the first utterance made by the *prajāpati* to the world of death).

If we look into the entire story of biophysical and biochemical functions that go into embryonic growth, we will be surprised how out of nothing something so hard as bones evolves to provide an anatomical structure which can even continue after death for a million years. When we consider all this, we find that, with the compassionate assistance of air, life is precipitated on earth. As we meditate on this mantra we feel awe and a sense of gratitude that along with the humblest beings like worms or mosquitoes or scorpions, the great philosophers and scientists are also cared for. As Jesus said, the lily of the field is as important to the divine as Solomon the king. Such is the grandeur and poetic richness of this mantra.

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Mantra 23

athaiṣa śloko bhavati --`yataścodeti sūryaḥ, astam yatra ca gacchati' iti prāṇādvā eṣa udeti, prāṇe'astameti; tam devāścakrire dharmam, sa evādya, sa u śvaḥ' iti; yadvā ete'amurhyadhriyanta tadevāpyadya kurvanti. tasmādekameva vratam charet, prāṇyāccaivāpānyācca, nenmā pāpmā mṛtyurāpnuvaditi; yadyu caret-samāpipayiṣet, teno etasyai sāyujyam salokatām jayati.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *eśaḥ* - this; *slokaḥ* - verse; *bhavati* - there is; *yataḥ ca* - from which; *sūryaḥ* - the sun; *udeti* - rises; *yatra* - in which; *ca* - and; *astam gacchati* - sets; *iti*; *prāṇāt* - from the cosmic vital force; *vai* - verily; *eṣaḥ* - this (sun); *udeti* - rises; *prāṇe* - in the cosmic vital force; *astam eti* - sets; *devāḥ* - gods; *tam dharmam* - the vow of that; *cakrire* - took up; *saḥ* - that; *eva* - indeed; *adya* - (is observed) today; *saḥ u* - and it; *śvaḥ* - (will be observed) to-morrow *iti; yat vai* - what (vow); *ete* - these (gods); *amurhi* - then; *adhriyanta* - observed; *tat* - that; *eva*- only; *adya api* - even today; *kurvanti* (they) observe; *tasmāt* - therefore; *ekam* - a single; *eva* - only; *vratam* - vow; *charet* - (a person) should observe; *prāṇyāt ca* - do the function of; *prāṇa* - perform respiration; *apānyāt ca* do the function of *apāna*, perform excretion; *net* - lest; *mā* - me; *pāpmā mṛtyuḥ* - the evil of death (exhaustion); *āpnuvat* - should overtake; *iti* - this (apprehending); *yadi u* - if ever; *caret* - (one) observes(it); *samāpipayiṣet* - (one) should desire to finish (it); *tena u* - through it; *etasyai devatāyai* -with this deity; *sāyujyam* - union; *salokatām* - (or) residence in the same world as; *jayati* - achieves

Now there is this mantra: "The gods took up the vow of that from which the sun rises and in which it sets. That very vow (is observed) today, and it (will be observed) to-morrow." The sun rises verily from *vāyu*, the cosmic vital force, and it also sets in that. The gods even today observe the same vow that they observed then. Therefore a

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person should take up a single vow -- perform only respiration and excretion, lest the evil of death should overtake one. And if one ever takes up the vow, one should desire to finish it. Through it one achieves union with, or residence in the same world as this deity.

Mantra twenty three is the last mantra in *brāhmaṇa* five. It brings us to an essential order that marks the consistency in the dynamics of phenomenal manifestation of the world. We have seen that we can observe and study evolutionary processes in the self-creating principle of the stars in the heaven, the living organisms on earth and the microscopic manifestation of the parts of an organism such as in the evolution of a cell or a tissue out of the molecular constituents of certain gases and chemicals. Although the materials involved in these three entities are of enormous quantitative and qualitative variations, they all belong to the same principle of manifestation, growth and evolution.

The *Aitareya Upaniṣad* marks the stages of the phenomenal world as the heavenly waters, the mirage-like spectrum of light, the coming into being of an organism similar to that of a tree and the ultimate cessation of it in the cosmic waters. The same four stages can be seen in the birth, growth, old age and death of a star like the sun. There are four stages in the life of a person: the period to familiarize oneself with the integral law of life - *brahmacārya;* the reproductive stage - *gṛhastha;* contemplative withdrawal - *vānaprastha;* and the final stage of renunciation - *sannyasa.* Similar stages can also be seen in the coming and going of micro-organisms. Paradoxically, the evolution of a star is much simpler than the elaborate process involved in the evolution of an organism such as a human being. In terms of thermodynamics the atomic development of a micro-organism is even more complicated than body-building. In all such programs, from origin to dissolution, there is an on-going process which is rationally understandable. Yet we cannot locate a causal mind behind the collective functioning which stealthily monitors the process. However, in the present mantra, whatever agent is responsible is considered a principle of commitment such as is seen in the undertaking of a religious ritual in which the agent will not leave the process unfinished or half-done. It is not a single cause that gives rise to manifestation, but a composition of many comple-

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mentary and supplementary causal factors. However, once the process is initiated, it is carried out to its ultimate finality. In the mantra this is called *vrata*, a determined act of a religiously sincere agent of volition, cognition and activity. Here, for the first time, we see that in and through the process of the world manifestation, the agent of manifestation appears as a holistic being which can be seen as the prototype of God or *īśvara*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, God is not a primeval deity who creates the world but an all-permeating purposive design which slowly gains its ontological testimony.

Brāhmaṇa 6

Mantra 1

trayam vā idam --- nāma rūpam karma; teṣām nāmnām vāgityetadeṣāmuktham ato hi sarvāṇi nāmānyuttiṣṭhanti. etadeṣām sāma, etaddhi sarvairnāmabhiḥ samam; etadeṣām brahma, etaddhi sarvāṇi nāmāni bibharti.

Word Meanings

idam - this (universe); *vai* - verily; *trayam* - (is made up of) three things; *nāma* - name; *rūpam* -form; *karma* - action; *teṣām eṣām nāmnām* - of these names already set forth; *vāk* the organ of speech, i.e., sound in general; *iti etat* - this; *uktham* - (is) the *uktha*, cause, material; *ataḥ hi* - for from it; *sarvāṇi* - all; *nāmāni* - names, particular sounds; *uttiṣṭhanti* - rise; *etat* - it (is); *eṣām* - their; *sāma* - *sāman*, common feature; *etat hi* - for it; *sarvaiḥ nāmabhiḥ* - to all names; *samam* - (is) common; *etat eṣām brahma* - it is the Absolute, the Self; *etat hi sarvāṇi* - all; *nāmāni* - names; *bibharti* - supports

Verily this universe is made up of three things: name, form and action. Sound is the material of those names, for all names rise from it. It is their common feature, for

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it is common to all names. It is their Self, for it supports all names.

This mantra reminds us of the opening passage of the Gospel according to St. John which commences with: "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God." Then he makes a further elucidation of the Word by saying: "Both light and life came from it. Whatever is, has come from it and yet darkness did not own it." Corresponding to what the Gospel says, we find references to the syllable *AUM*, both in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, as the unexpended word which accounts for everything in space and time. To say *AUM*, a sound (*śabda*) is to be produced, which elongates in time. Out of silence it arises. It tapers in its intensity and finally merges back into silence. Thus it is like a rising wave which comes to a peak and merges back into its source. Symbolically, *AUM* represents an arousal in consciousness, a decrease in its quantum of energy and finally a merger which is continued in silence. So *AUM* is said to have three syllables: *A, U, M* and a non-syllable, silence. *A* stands for the cognitive consciousness of a human mind, the subject-object interaction in the wakeful state. *U* stands for subjective awareness where the perceived object merges in the conceptual consciousness. Then both the subject-object and the subjective experience whither away in deep sleep, *M*. It is the hide-out or the unconscious where the rudiments of the object and the subject lie in wait to be recalled, the causal basis from which the concept of any object can be recalled with its name.

A triangle is formed by three lines which enclose a space with three angles. Similarly, the world is created out of the triad of name, form and purposive function. Nothing can be considered without being assigned a name. All names are mutually related as parts of sound that can be modified. Within the name is also the form which is one of the greatest magical phenomenons of the world. The spatial dimension of a form has no restriction. You can draw an elephant of the size of an ant and yet a single outline can clearly mark off a conceptual elephant from a conceptual ant. Just as the word is what is heard with the ear, it can also be conveniently condensed in the characters that symbolize a certain approved sound. The characters can be written with a

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stylus or a pencil or a brush. The device of words which inhabit the realm between the ear and the eye was developed. Naming a thing, pronouncing or articulating the name and writing it all require physical effort of the person concerned. Hence name, form and function are intrinsically connected.

When a human being is prepared in the womb of its mother, there is an embryonic sculpting going on for eight to nine months to provide the person with all the accessories required to chisel a world out of its mind-stuff which will have a one to one correspondence with all archetypal names, forms and functions plus innumerable variations of each. Even words used as names can be put into different categories such as nouns, pronouns, proper nouns, common nouns and collective nouns. Names can be further enhanced with qualities of perception with the use of adjectives. Similarly, verbs can be modified with adverbs. As we observe the world more and more, our inner equipment, which makes mental images using words, becomes not only as elaborate as the world but even more so because the human being is a co-creator of his or her world. Individual consciousness is an architect which gives one's world correspondence with the worlds of other individuals.

It all begins with the combining of two functions: articulating a word and entering into the enjoyment of the world as a consumer. The common organ is the tongue which is used for oral and verbal communication as well as for tasting food. When a newly born child gives its primal scream it is calling the world's attention. It proclaims itself as a tangible object which is inseparable from the physical world to which all others belong. The primal scream is a symbolic name which the child gives to itself, meaning, "Here is a communicating person, pay heed to it." It also proclaims to the world that the greatest problem of life, hunger, is present and it will perish if it is not immediately fed. Thus it not only functions with its own given faculties but also makes it imperative for all around to act in a hurry. There is a sense of urgency to meet with its hunger. The creation of the word does not happen secretly or silently, but with a loud scream and the securing of the attention of all other organisms within the reach of its utterance. It begins with only one cry but it is a cry which can be elaborated to the very end of one's life, not only in one language but in several languages. It is surprising that a donkey or a crow, with but a few variations in their style of braying or

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crowing, can live a whole lifetime, while human beings need millions of words. Suppose we take every word from the Oxford Dictionary or Webster's Dictionary and hide them away, along with their connotations and the objects to which those connotations refer. Then what will happen to the world we know? It will be completely demolished. And yet we think of the word only as an auditory vibration that brushes against the drums of our ears or as written characters that make blemishes on a paper.

The word is more than a caricature. It has a spirit which is intertwined with the spirit of the human self. The word is the world and it has the power to put into our systems a series of behavioral dynamics from which we cannot extricate ourselves. The more we give ourselves to the tyranny of name, form and the alchemy of biophysical, biochemical and psychosociologic and biopsychologic transformations, the more we forget our original Self. We forget the nature of the energy with which we began and how it transfigured into many new identities which we and others claim to be ours. When the whole history of a person's life in all its perspectives is considered, we get the highly falsified phenomena of the non-Self. This non-Self is the darkness which St. John speaks of when he says: "And the darkness did not see it or accept it." Like the prodigal son of the Bible, we have traveled far away from the source of our clear light and we struggle endlessly, unable to cross the smoke screen back into the source from where the odyssey began. The return to the origin is itself realization, but we have made such a plethora of images through the transformations of the non-Self that we are weighed down to a state of debility like that of the prodigal son who was compelled to eat the refuse fed to the pigs he tended. This mantra comes to us as an eye-opener, showing the terrific tragedy to which every living person is exposed. It is from here we have to chart a route for our return to the original.

Mantra 2

atha rūpāṇām cakṣurityetadeṣāmuktham; ato hi sarvāṇi rūpāṇyuttiṣṭhanti; etadeṣām sāma, etaddhi sarvai rupaiḥ samam; etadeṣām brahma, etaddhi sarvāṇi rūpāṇi bibharti.

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Word Meanings

atha - now; *rūpāṇām* - of (particular) forms; *cakṣuḥ itī etat* - the eye, i.e., form in general; *rūpāṇī* - particular forms; *rūpaṭh* - to particular forms; (Rest as before.)

Now form in general is the material of particular forms, for all forms rise from it. It is their common (feature, for it is common) to all particular forms. It is their Self, for it supports all forms.

In the previous mantra attention was given to name and in the present mantra we focus our attention on form. We have already seen that the definition of the universe is given as an aggregate of name *(nāma)*, form *(rūpa)* and the object of interest or the functional element to which both the name and form refer. The world is kept within the frame of reference of the time-space continuum. In the Western world, the object is given preference over an idea. Science is always said to be objective. In India, the idea is given primacy over its objectification or crystallization. Before an actual child is born of its parents the child's father and mother desire to have a child. Then the child is only an idea. Hence in the first mantra we discussed the scope and the universality of name. In that mantra we were told that the word is the material cause of everything. In the present mantra it is stated that the perceiving eye is the material cause of the universe. Material cause in Sanskrit is called *upādāna kāraṇa*, the primal cause from which things are drawn out to assume various forms. The potter draws out of clay many vessels like a pot, a jar or a vase, while in reality there is only clay. When it is modified in one shape it gets the name "pot." Modified in another way it is called a jar and in still another way it is called a vase. After the clay assumes these shapes which have different intended purposes, nobody thinks of the material out of which they are made.

Similarly, we have only consciousness for our starting point. What we see, so the sight is called. That is why it is said that the seeing eye is the material cause of everything. The term "seeing eye" is to be understood as a general name for all the instruments of perception. The eye sees forms. It is an instrument of physical vision. The ear hears sounds, and therefore names. It

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is the instrument for audition. It is with the organ of touch, the sensitive skin, that we perceive the texture of things. Similarly, with the organ of taste, that is, our tongue, we experience sweet and sour, salt and bitter. We smell with the nose, the organ for olfactory experience. All these are eyes with which perception is directly experienced. It is with the same eye that a person sees a flower and a leaf, the sun and the moon, a table and a chair. That means we need only one instrument to see a multitude of things. In each organ of perception there is a general character. However, the same can also be used for specific observations and specific experiences. When we see a particular flower, to realize that it is a flower, we should have the idea of a flower. In all the dialectical experiences of perception, we see specific objects and, along with them, we experience classes or types to which that particular object of perception belongs.

When we first think of form, we only think of the characteristic shape of a thing by which one visual object can be distinguished from another. For one moment, let us consider how many forms are huddling together to make this vast universe. The form of a lizard is different from the form of a fly. A snake looks different from a flower. A cock looks different from a mouse. These are all real forms. Millions of such forms constitute our visual perception. Now consider all the thousands and thousands of names that are given to forms which are recorded in dictionaries. We are led to think that form is only a visual phenomena but that is not true. Just as sunlight has seven colors, sound also has seven standardized musical notes which are given in the octave in which the first and the last notes are similar. With variations of the octave, millions of modes can be given to music. Just as there are types in visual form, there are types in auditory forms. The texture of touch is given many designs in everyday life. Clothes can be of satin finish or velvet finish. They can be silky and soft. They can also be rough and ragged. Between white heat and freezing cold, there are many varieties of touch. Tastes are innumerable. With the tip of our tongues we can taste saltiness. With the sides of our tongues we experience sourness. In the middle of our tongues sweetness is easily appreciated. Nodules are distributed all over the tongue to taste the pungent and the hot. The root of the tongue is for bitterness. Smell can go from the most nauseating stench to the most adorable fragrance.

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In all these cases of sensuous experience, there are two factors between which our consciousness has to move rapidly. They are the tangible object "out there" and the mentally conceived type or class to which every object conforms. That is why it is said that perception is the material cause out of which all perceived pluralities issue. What is it that gets modified into a class and what is it that holds out its speciality as a here and now ontologic entity? Both are supported by the Self. The Self in its infinitude is the Absolute. The dichotomy between the empirical object and the mentation of its conceptual class was taken as a subject for description from the times of the Vedic rishis and the ancient Greeks. In the eighteen dialogues of Plato this subject is discussed most elaborately.

Before we go to the next mantra, we should familiarize ourselves with the features of perceptual thinking. In order to cope with the world, the mind must fulfill two functions. It must gather information from empirical objects outside and it should also subject those data to a process of interpretation so that the mind can retain the essence of that experience as part of its conceptual ability. In modern education we put a lot of emphasis on scientific discipline. Consequently, conception is made secondary to perception. The East looks for the constant and the West rejoices in the transient, the changing. The Chinese people have drawn a balance between the yin and the yang, the changeless and the changing. In heaven they saw the fixed forms of the constellations rotate in their orbits and on earth they saw the changing panorama in tune with the altering seasons. So they presumed that in heaven everything is orderly and on earth everything is chaotic. According to Socrates, all enquiring and learning are but recollection, the immortal soul having been born many times. We find many references to this in Plato's *Dialogues*. Plato called concepts "the intelligibles" and direct perceptions "the visibles."

According to the *Upaniṣads* you cannot draw a line between the intelligible and the visible. In the search for truth, we abstract the common truth from innumerable individual instances. At the same time, the general is certified to be true because of the truth of what is individually experienced. Hence it is said that abstraction must be complemented with definition. You cannot define a thing without mentioning two aspects. You have to say to which genus the defined entity belongs and you also have to

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say how a species is differentiated from the other species which belong to the same genus. That is done only by pinpointing the differentia. According to Aristotle, even in the most fleeting experience we get a glimpse of the universal. The universal is made available to us by the revelation of truth which is like a twinkle in the eye of a shimmering star. Aristotle called it an entelechy. The forms we see here make a facade that hides the true nature of our Self from us. No realization is possible so long as we stand perplexed before the changing illusion of the seeming plurality of forms. Hence the *Upaniṣad* appeals to our good sense to become sober and not be carried away by the vicissitudes of the kaleidoscopically changing panorama. Truth is not far. It is the very foundation of our experience. Actually it is not experience but it is the imperiential verity of everything. Seek that truth and it will set you free.

Mantra 3

atha karmaṇāmātmetyetadeṣāmuktham. ato hi sarvāṇi karmāṇyuttiṣṭhanti; etadeṣām sāma, etaddhi sarvaiḥ karmabhiḥ samam; etadeṣām brahma, etaddhi sarvāṇi karmāṇi bibharti; tadetattrayam sadekamayamaātmā, ātmo ekaḥ sannetattrayam; tadetadamṛtam sattyena channam; prāṇo va amṛtam, nāmarūpe sattyam; tābhyāmayam prāṇaśchannaḥ. iti ṣaṣṭham brāhmaṇam. iti prathamo'dhyāyaḥ.

Word Meanings

atha - and; *karmaṇām* - of (particular) actions; *ātmā iti etat* - the body, i.e., general activity in the body; *karmāṇi* - (particular) actions; *karmabhiḥ* - to (particular) actions; *tat* - that; *etat* - this; *trayam* - three; *sat* - despite being; *ekam* - (is) one; *ayam* this; *ātmā* - body; *ātmā* - the body (is); *u* - again; *ekaḥ* - one; *san* - despite being; *etat* - this; *trayam* - triad; *tat etat amṛtam* - deathless principle; *sattyena* - by *sattya; channam* - (is) hidden; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force, the subtle body; *vai* - verily; *amṛtam* - (is) the immortal principle; *nāmarūpe* - name and form (are); *sat-*

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tyam - the *sattya*, name and form; *tābhyām* - by these two; *ayam* - this; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force, the subtle body; *channaḥ* - (is) hidden; (The rest is similar.)

And general activity in the body is the source of particular actions. For all such actions rise from it. It is their common feature, for it is common to all particular action. It is their Self, for it supports all particular actions. These, although they are three, are one - this body. The body again, although it is one, is these three. The deathless principle is hidden by *sattya*. The vital force is the deathless principle, and name and form are *sattya*; so this vital force is hidden by them.

An idea that pulsates is a symbolic throb that involves the location of a point in time and in space to begin a function. Before its commencement, there is neither time nor space. Time and space simultaneously arise as a spontaneous event. The idea can be given a name for future reference. After the first pulsation there will be several elaborations of it through reverberation. The first throb itself is a form. Through repeated reverberation that form becomes elaborated, occupying more space and transforming with more and more mass and details which can be classified. Thus one body involves three principles - form, name and function.

In this world there is a hierarchy of such events. The first was the emergence of the cosmos. For a long time human beings did not know the dimensions of the cosmos to which this world belongs. After several millennia of observations of the heavens and earth, we now have the astounding idea that the galaxy in which our planet and its luminaries exist is several million years old and contains millions of stars which are greater than our own sun. These studies reveal that our galaxy is only a small galaxy of relatively recent origin and there are millions of others. Whatever be the girth or dimension of all these galaxies put together, the cosmos is considered the primal body. For billions of years trillions of activities have been going on in that body. We may therefore think of the metacosmos as the fountain source of everything, the material cause. Next in the hierarchy is our own galaxy as a body with a name and a form and varying astro-

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physical, astro-chemical and astro-electrical functions, a grand field of electromagnetic operations. The third in the hierarchy is the body of the solar system, the sun and its satellites, the planets and their moons and the countless millions of asteroids. "Solar system" is the name, the rotation and revolution of the planets around the sun is the form, and each planet has its function interrelated with the function of other planets. The fourth in the hierarchy is our own good earth, the blue and green planet where the evolution of life has been in progress for more than fifteen million years and we human beings are the most cherished products of the story of the heavenly bodies. So it is only appropriate that on earth we give an individuated human the next placement in our reference to name, form and function. If we draw a line from the formation of the cosmos to a thinking, imagining, scheming mind of an individual, we have a vertical parameter in which we can arrange in a descending dialectics everything from the several galaxies, to the solar system, to the earth, to evolution of life. Ultimately we come to the cerebration which is privately going on in your mind and in my mind.

It is in such an expansion of consciousness that the ancient seer is inviting us to participate. However varied and elaborate this picture is, there is a homogeneity in the functional verity and purposiveness which we see from moment to moment. Hence it is said that the general activity in the body is the source of particular actions. The individual's body is similar to one's home, township or village, municipality or corporation, the administration of one's country, the federation of all governments and the management of the universe in which a human being is an insignificant thing. That is how we have to relate the particular to the universal. When we individuals plan our houses, they are built with many correspondences to our own bodies. Provisions for seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, engaging in activities, and moving out and in, are all to be worked out systematically. Our auditory systems admit the vibrations of the sky. We keep our houses in such a way that unnecessary noises can be kept at a distance and the most useful dialogues can be held across a table. To see, we take advantage of letting the sunlight into all our rooms and supplement it with electric and other lights which can make our lives bright and cheerful all the time. To give comfort we make special arrangements in our bedrooms, living rooms, studies and playgrounds, and not a single detail is

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left out. Hence it is said the functions in the body are the common features of all embodied beings, from the smallest bug to the grand galaxy. In all these we can see a commonality of the particular functions that come as an elaboration of the unchanging course of the functional world.

If you watch from inside each of your moments such as when you are studying, cooking, playing or discussing, you can see that you are presiding over that function - you plan it, you monitor it, you control it, you benefit from it, you close it down. Your controlling presence is the all-seeing light of the Self. This is so in the functioning of a biologic cell, a solar system or the universe. All have a presiding principle. We are reminded once again that names, forms and functions are mutually supporting. The mantra says: "Although they are three, they are one, and that one is seen as this body." Ever since we came out of our mothers' wombs, parts of us have been decaying and dying and automatically replaced. Destruction and death are not unknown and unwelcome friends to us. They are our eternal companions. Transformation is the game we are playing. Hence it is said that the deathless principle is hidden by *sattya*. It is true that I am now breathing. It is true that breath left me, but it is equally true that I am again breathing. There is the undeniable fact or the persistence of an existential ground of everything; that is *sat*. It is within *sat* that changes, transformations, dissolution and all such are happening. One who has an insight into that which continuously generates fresh time, fresh space, fresh bodies and fresh dimensions has no fears to entertain. The eternal is firmly sitting on the seat of the transient. What is seemingly moving and changing, like the vital breath, supports the ever-circulating function of cosmic life. Hence it is said that the vital force is the deathless principle. Paradoxically, it is truth which hides truth. Name and form are so true and yet they hide the grand scheme of unceasing function. Hence it is said that the vital force or *prāṇa* is hidden by what is obvious as name and form.

The rishi wants us to remember our need to know the Self. All the fantastic elaborations spoken of are the non-Self. It is out of that mirage-like magical fortress that a speck of our consciousness has to fly in the opposite direction to get out of its imprisonment. The Self is a hidden splendor imprisoned in the non-Self. Such is the keynote of the challenge with which this chapter closes. Realizing the tragedy to which we have come through millen-

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nia, the rishi wants us to pray, "From the non-Self may I be led to the Self, from the dark ignorance of infatuation may I be brought to the light of clear discernment, and from the deepest core of death, may I be restored to deathlessness." So let us chant: *AUM śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.*

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APPENDIX I

This is a critical epitomization of *Sureśvara's Vārtika* on the *brāhmaṇa* of the horse sacrifice. The first *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* presents the symbol of the horse, and the second *brāhmaṇa* presents the horse sacrifice. These two sections can be together called *Aśvamedhabrāhmaṇa.* Sureśvara commences his elucidation by calling attention to a passage from Śankara's commentary. Vedānta comes as a continuation of the *Vedas.* The *Vedas* are mainly ritualistic in their purport. The *Upaniṣads*, on the other hand, deal with knowledge. There is a necessary connection between action emphasis and wisdom teaching. The *Aśvamedha*, or horse sacrifice, provides a link between the Vedic symbols of the ritual and the Upaniṣadic revaluation of the knowledge implied in the symbols.

According to Śankara, the *śrutis* (*a priori* wisdom texts) implied here are the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (10.4.3.9), the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.3.28), and the *Taittīrīya Samhīta* (5.3. 12.2). In a ritualistic sacrifice, there are certain technical terms to understand: 1) the *dravya*, the materials that are to be offered in the sacrifice; 2) the *devata*, the presiding deity of the sacrifice, which, in the present case is the god of fire, *Agni*; 3) although the *Upaniṣad* is mainly a contemplative text, as this portion of the text is a link between the Veda and the Vedānta, the worship suggested here is called *upāsanā. Upāsanā* means "to sit near the deity for worship and offer various forms of devotion." Several items of *upāsanā* are mentioned in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.1.2. The morning and the evening symbolize two houses of devotion. The eastern sky illuminated by the golden rays of the sun is looked upon as the house of glory (*mahimagraha*) of the beginning. The western sea illuminated by the silver rays of the moon is also a house of glory suggesting the terminus of the sacrifice. The second *brāhmaṇa* refers to the devotion given to fire.

The first two *brāhmaṇas* are followed by the presentation of *hiraṇyagarbha*, the promise of phenomenal life. It implies the basic concept of the continuity of the Self, the *sūtrātmā* (*sūtra*

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means 'string', and *ātmā* means 'Self'; i.e., the Self that goes as a string through all items of knowledge). In a ritualistic sacrifice, when everything is offered into the fire and burnt to ashes, physically nothing remains. But spiritually, a sense of fulfillment comes to the sacrificer. Technically this is called *apūrva* or *dharma*. The burnt sacrifice is an allegory that suggests the death of a being, which is the same as getting lost in phenomenality, and the resurrection of the same into the eternal field of immortality. Śankara maintains these symbols as a source to establish his system of philosophy which is known as *satkāranavāda*, meaning "the cause alone has reality." A tree comes from a seed. The seed is the cause. The tree is the effect *(kārya)*. The tree will later condense itself into another seed from which a new tree can come. Between the cause and the effect is the completion of a cycle. It is like a throb *(spanda)* in which the first half is a process of expansion, and the second half is a return to the original through a process of contraction. The symbol of the sacrifice is implied in the noumenon getting lost in the phenomenon, and the burning of the phenomenon to regain once again the noumenon.

Sureśvara never entirely agrees with Śankara's theory of the relationship between cause and effect. Outside Veda/Vedānta, there are four Buddhist schools of logic. The Indian theory of logic, *Nyāya*, and other Vedāntins like Rāmānuja and Madhva also hold alternative theories to Śankara. So it is only natural that Sureśvara has to elaborate on the theories of Śankara. Rāmānuja and Madhva came after Sureśvara, so he had no way of knowing the objections of "qualified monism" of Rāmānuja and Madhva's theory of knowledge, "*tattvavāda*."

Sureśvara calls his work *Vārtika* which means "an examination of what is said, unsaid, or wrongly said" in the commentary of Śankara. Thus a *vārtika* develops the meaning of even the implied thoughts in the work which it elucidates. Śankara postulated the positions of anterior critics, but he never mentioned who they were.

In the first two *brāhmaṇas*, the *prajāpati* or *hiraṇyagarbha* is identified as the horse (*aśvam*), water (*arka*), ocean (*samudra*), the consumer (*aditi*), death (*mṛtyu*), and the sun (*āditya*). When such kinds of alternations are given, psychologists like Jung call it a "transformation of symbols." But Śankara considers them to be varying approaches to the Absolute. Of all this variety, death

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is to be considered the foremost. When we think of death, it occurs to us as the end of life. But in the Upaniṣad, it is given precedence. To one who relishes the phenomenality of *māyā*, life is an adorable principle. For one who wants to get rid of phenomenality, death appears as a gateway to greater truth. That is why the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, which follows the ritual portion of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, again and again puts the stress on the reality of death (*mṛtyu ātmabhāva*). Death in this context marks a cessation of the cycle or chain of worldly life. For all the above-mentioned studies, the two source books suggested are *Śāstraprakāśika* and *Nyāyakalpalatika*.

In the Upaniṣadic lore, two animals are mentioned as having a close relationship with humans. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the dog is mentioned. In the Indian mind, the dog is not looked upon as a sacred animal; it is rather the extreme negative power of holiness. In the *Bhagavad Gīta*, the *brāhmaṇa*, the cow and the elephant are put on one side as the most sacred, and the dog-eater and the dog on the other as the least sacred. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the *hiraṇyagarbha*, *prajāpati*, and the *sūtrātma* are interchangeable, and the horse is given the allegoric significance of the spiritual metamorphosis. The horse is the animal of the warrior, always ready to take command, to fling itself into action. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* and in the *Bhagavad Gīta*, the horse is given as the symbol of the five senses. War and peace belong to the world of *samsāra*, or phenomenality. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the horse is given as a vehicle of the *devas*, of *asuras*, and of human beings. Human intimacy with the horse and the faithful watchdog as inseparable companions is proverbial.

Sacrifice is always the offering of what one loves most. To propitiate Diana, Agamemnon had to sacrifice his daughter, Iphegínia. Jehovah asked the patriarch Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* begins with the sacrifice of the horse which was done by a king to gain sovereignty. The sovereignty that is aimed at in the *Upaniṣad* is the supremacy of one's own self. For human beings, killing is connected with what they hate or abhor. In the present case, it is described as what is most pleasing. Nothing is more pleasing than the heralding of the day by the dawn. The opening mantra of the *Upaniṣad* commences with the announcement of the dawn (*uṣas*). The dawn marks the beginning of the day, symbolically the beginning of time. Time

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initiates everyone and everything into the realm of the actual. The term 'actual' is connected with action. To be is also to become, and to do. Time cannot remain pinpointed to any static form of existence; it has to move on. It moves from the present to the past, or rather, from the future to the present by kicking off the present into the past. The present is sacrificed to transform its transiency into the fixation of the past. Although the past cannot be revived, it is eternally present as memory. What is known becomes a fixation in time, in form, or with the appellation of a name. What is ultimately to be known is the nameless, the formless, and the quality-less. Only from the immanent can one aspire for transcendence.

As we pass on from the sacrificial horse to death, hunger, *vaiśvānara*, *hiraṇyagarbha*, *prajāpati*, *manu*, and *śatarūpa*, we get a sequential arrangement of the phenomenal world. The normal order of the phenomenal world is to know and to devise an action which can further one's knowledge. This is very much like science leading to technology. It is called *jñāna-karma-samucāya*, the integration of action with knowledge. However, philosophers like Śankara warn against the compulsion of the action mechanisms that prompt an actor to go from one obligatory action to another. Unitive action is to be discriminated from compulsive or relativistic action. The vision of spiritual sublimation is recommended to correct the compulsive pull of action. *Karma* is always intrinsically connected with the time factor. Hence, in the symbol of the horse, a detailed account of time is given as the forelegs, the hind legs and the joints of the four legs. Also, morning and evening are suggested by the front and the rear of the animal. Actually, in the present illustration of the horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*), no physical horse is presented; *aśvamedha* is here meant here to be a metamorphosis of the whole process of genesis. One should think of oneself as the horse. The sacrifice is to be understood in terms of one's own personal evolution. The *aśvamedha* is a sacrifice performed by a *kṣatriya*, not a *brāhmaṇa*, although the *brāhmaṇa* knows the principle of the sacrifice. The *brāhmaṇa* understands it as an *upāsanā* in which the performer transforms one's whole life into a progressive ritual of renouncing one stage after another. If we meditate on the mantras with this understanding of the sacrificial horse, we'll be benefited by our own intimate understanding of self-surrender and the transcendence of the physical. The allegory is presented

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with a philosophical purport of going from the gross and material aspect of the world to the essential silence of ultimate Truth.

In two *Upaniṣads*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Aitareya*, the *śruti* declares that in the beginning, there was nothing. This statement cannot be slighted. If nothing existed, one cannot presume that cause existed, and only the effect did not exist. There is no reason why the cause should be supported while the effect is rejected. One may say that when you see the seed alone, you do not see the sprout or the tree, and thus on the basis of non-perception (*anupalabdhi*), you can hold a view that only the cause is real because it is seen while the effect is not seen. Nobody rejects the reality of the self even though it is not visibly perceived. Subjective existence has a validity of its own, and even when objective perception is made, it is substantiated with subjective conceptions. In the opening mantra of the second *brāhmaṇa*, the reference to *mṛtyu* and hunger comes without the objectification of anything to die or anyone who is hungry. Both hunger and death are negative ideas which can be conceptualized only from the word-image. In common parley, one should say that a certain life-form is hungry because of the non-availability of food, and that organism is in the danger of death. That is not how it is presented in this *brāhmaṇa*. *Mṛtyu*, or death, is described as the presence of darkness. When darkness pervades or envelops existence, we do not see what is existing in the dark. Thus, in this context, there is a viability in presuming that the darkness conceals a certain existence which later surfaces as the formation of the mind. The natural unfolding of the mind from the unconscious to the conscious is also suggestive of that which hides what is unknown or not presented in consciousness. When *mṛtyu* comes, its effect is similar to that of the initial veiling of truth. Thus it is by understanding the effect that the conceptual cause is presumed. We find a similar statement in the first *brāhmaṇa* where the eastern glory and the western glory are equated with the ocean (*samudra*) as the origin (*yoni*), and the ocean as the cause (*bandham*). Whichever allegory is used, in some sense there has to be that which precedes and that which follows.

In spite of all the eagerness of the philosopher to present the nameless, the formless, the unutterable, he will be compelled to conceptualize and present concepts with the aid of name and form as a kind of necessary evil. Philosophers like Śankara in

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the East and Plotinus in the West fight shy of conceptualized word images, but they also ultimately succumb to the tyranny of words. This is also true of theistic concepts, especially in Islam in which God is shorn of all attributes and all comparisons. Yet the word "Allah," which is a pure negation of all that can be conceived, ultimately turns out to be a concept, and the ninety-nine names of Allah come in through the back door, as it were. This is very much like Lao Tsu's *Tao Te Ching* which maintains the paradox that the name that can be given is no name, and yet it is described with ten thousand names.

Like the dual principles of cause and effect, there is another dual concept which is also to be made clear: existence (*sat*) and non-existence (*asat*). Advaita Vedantins like Śankara, who are also called *satkāraṇavādis*, give the status of existence to a causal factor (*kāraṇa*). Everything that is elaborated from the cause to the effect is considered to be potently latent in existence. But the conditional state of its elaboration is considered to be non-existent on the basis of the argument that it is not always present. Between an anterior seed and a posterior seed, there come many elaborations like the sprout, the trunk, branches and roots, leaves and flowers. These have time limits for their existence. According to Śankara what is and what is not are the phenomenon, and for that reason are illusory. But this is not the theory of those who consider evolution as a fact of life. In evolution, just as in physics, there is a conservation of energy, and that is maintained through all the various transformations. Whatever energy is latent in the cause undergoes transformation through the phases of evolution, and non-existence is only a comparative aspect of these phases. For instance, when the egg is there, the chick is visibly non-existent. However, in principle, the egg is the potential chick. When out of the egg the chicken comes with the elaboration of its beak, feathers, legs, claws and wings, there is a posterior absence of the egg. The conflict in such arguments is mainly based on a philosophical view of nominalism in contrast with the psychological view of functionalism. If the flux of existence is admitted, there is no need to establish a static concept of existence.

To get over the fixity of concepts, the Buddhists allow a mode of argument called *uha* and *apoha*. When the tree comes from the seed, one can infer that it was latent in the seed. That is *uha*, inference. And when the tree manifests, however different it

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looks from the seed, there is an inner certitude that the original seed has materialized as the tree. The kind of thought that conforms to the existential verity of becoming is *apoha*. There is an inference about the pre-manifestation which is of an introspective nature and also a post-manifestation comprehension which is of prospective inference. The *uha* and the *apoha* comprise the dialectical unitiveness existing between the pre-manifested state and the post-manifested state. Philosophers in their prejudicial offense to psychology are holding on to bifurcated aspects of nominalism. This kind of logic-chopping can also be seen in the works of A. J. Ayer, Wittgenstein, and Karnap. Narayana Guru calls such arguments "meta-arguments" (*ativada*). Sureśvara's commentary is mainly a historical defense arising from the arguments put forward in the time of Śankara by the Buddhist schools, especially *Vijñānavādin* idealism, *Kṣaṇikavāda* momentary existence, and *Sūnyavādin*, nihilism.

As the main wisdom teaching arising from the symbolism of the horse sacrifice comes in an elaborated form, we shall now pass onto the latter part of the first chapter in which the Indian theory of the genesis of the elemental world, the origin of life and its development, and the establishment of the social order can be critically recapitulated and revised.

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APPENDIX II

The first chapter has six *brāhmaṇas*. This appendix refers to *brāhmaṇas* three, four, five and six. The third *brāhmaṇa* has twenty-eight mantras, the fourth has seventeen mantras, the fifth has twenty-three mantras, and the sixth has three mantras. Each *brāhmaṇa* presents a special topic of importance that pertains to the several phases of the genesis of the philosophically conceived world comprised of the physical elements governed by natural laws, the origin of life and its evolution, the expansion of consciousness, and the configuration of values which unfold in a gradual manner from values of necessity to the final spectrum of values that are lived in social accomplishments. As we go from *brāhmaṇa* to *brāhmaṇa*, we will touch upon: 1) the epistemology of this study; 2) the methodology employed in the *Upaniṣad* and; 3) the axiology of values with special reference to ontologic necessities and teleologic envisioning.

The best known commentator of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is Śankara. Anyone who wants to make a deep probe into the spiritual, moral, and philosophical investigations of the *Upaniṣad* has no other way to be led into the intricacies of the problem except by becoming familiar with the details of Śankara's commentary. He employs a dialectical method of presenting the views of anterior critics and then his own conclusive position. Śankara's anterior critics are, in most cases, of little relevance to us in the modern age after so many philosophical insights have been achieved by both the East and the West. Modern science, particularly of the West, has taken upon itself almost all of the problems ensuing from human encounter with the physical world. Many traditional theories connected with the elements of physical and chemical significance have now been thrashed out by scientists, and it has become imperative to revalue previous philosophical speculations in the light of modern science. Similarly, the speculations of science can be renormalized in the light of the visions of ancient masters which hold good, unaffected by time, space, and clime.

The development of genesis presented in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*

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Upaniṣad assumes a middle position between the theological modes of the Semitic religions and the mathematical modes of the physical and chemical assessment made by modern science. Therefore, the present study provides a wide scope for comparison with both the ancient world's religious theories and the modern world's scientific theories. As we have already given elaborate commentaries on each mantra, we will limit these remarks to basic references.

In the first mantra of the second *brāhmaṇa*, three postulations are given: 1) this universe was enveloped by death or hunger alone; 2) hunger decided to have a mind; 3) when the mind worshipped itself, water arose from it out of which came the other elements. What purpose do these postulations serve in the exposition of this *Upaniṣad*? No living being has the awareness that it is going to manifest. Therefore, the first postulation gives us a retrospective review of the cause for any action which is none other than a pressing need. For about a year, a human being is in the making. During that period (*samvatsara*), the person to be is oblivious of time and space. It has no identification with name or form and no conscious deliberation of any sort. A great unconscious activity is continuously going on until the child is delivered from its mother's womb. That state which marks the beginning of a person fully tallies with the Upaniṣadic statement, "In the beginning, there was nothing here, and this was enveloped by death." One has no awareness of entering one's mother's womb or the combining of sperm and egg. The period of lying in wait in the womb is essentially monitored by hunger. During that period of waiting, the fetus has no mind. But it takes only a few seconds or minutes for a baby to give a primal cry which is the first expression of the new-born's mind. Thus, mind is a direct product of the need of an individual.

What can be seen in a new-born babe is its intense defense tactics against imminent death. The child knows nothing more valuable than its own life. Therefore, the birth of an individual is also the birth of a person's need and self-centeredness. It is said here, "He moved about worshipping himself." In fact, this act of self-interest and self-defense is the entire history of a living being on earth. From this unceasing activity of bodily self-preservation, we find release only when we ultimately accept death. Thus the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* begins with an honest, candid reflection on the plight of an individuated self which has to fight hun-

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ger to the very last day of the individual's life on earth. This plight is the prompting for all one's actions. All actions of a person are programmed. The program is designed half by the compulsive procreative urge which is the very stuff of the physical world, and half by the light that is shining through the individuation of the self which is destined to be the spiritual counterpart of the individual's physical life.

The main function of the mind is to discern causes and effects, to relate an effect to its corresponding cause, and to make each item of the cause and effect cycle an accomplished fact. The whole cycle of life being reabsorbed into death may take one hundred years. In the meantime, what respite one can find for oneself comes from carefully discerning which actions can be avoided and which actions are obligatorily enjoined by the structural and functional peculiarities of the personalized state of one's individuation. Actions that stem from biological necessities such as going to sleep at night, being awake in the daytime, cleansing the body and environment to avoid diseases, maintaining the body/mind complex as a healthy instrument, and feeding oneself from time to time to supply the individuated system with energy are called *nityakarmas*, necessary or non-optional actions. There is another set of action propensities which the individual has a choice to perform or not to perform. These are the duties one volunteers to perform in accordance with one's station in life. There are positive and negative aspects of enjoined or volunteered actions. An action is enjoined when a person chooses it as their own duty, such as a teacher teaching, a farmer farming, a physician nursing the sick, etc. There is a third kind of action called *nimittakarma*, incidental or occasional promptings which a person can accept or forego. For the ignorant being who has no power to discriminate, there may be a million actions dragging him or her into the most painful situations, keeping the person tied down to phenomenality through several lives. Thus, at the very outset of the *Upaniṣad*, we are advised that we live in a world of caprice where illusory promptings can always lead us astray from what is relevant and necessary to a million wrong paths which can make life a torment and distress forever. A wise person who sees the purpose of the first mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa* can set himself or herself on the right path. Even from the beginning, one can use this very life on earth as an occasion to educate oneself. That way one can avoid all promptings of unnecessary ac-

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tion and enjoy fully the discipline one undertakes. This will perfect one's personalized self which is the gateway to regaining the supreme truth to which one truly belongs.

The next study is of the liaison between spirit and matter. The systemization of Indian schools of philosophy came much after the Indian people's familiarization with the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. However, the basic principles adopted by the Indians in the six orthodox systems of the Hindus and reacted upon by the Buddhist, Jain, and materialistic schools of heterodoxy came from the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. So far, nobody has taken pains to clear this vast field of philosophical chaos by clearly examining, analyzing, and defining each philosophical term in relationship with corresponding source information and the derived utility of these terms in the post-Upaniṣadic period. We can clearly see an attempt made by the rishi of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* to earmark item after item for review, analysis, and redefinition. The first such item comes between the second and tenth mantras of the third *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter. Actually, the proposed enquiry cannot be presented in a brief survey of these mantras. But at least a useful hint can be given for researchers to work on this issue more leisurely.

The two binary principles adopted by Kapila in his *Sāṁkhya Pravacana Sūtras* are the very basis of Indian philosophy despite the fact that Śankara is antagonistic towards Kapila and his system of *Sāṁkhya*. In India Kapila holds a position which is akin to that of Aristotle in Western philosophy. Śankara attempts to overawe three major groups of critics with his relentless defense. These three groups are the Sāṁkhyas, the Mīmāṁsākas, and the Buddhists, particularly the nihilists (Sūnyavādi). The two fundamental principles outlined by Kapila are spirit (*puruṣa*) and procreative nature (*prakṛti*). These two principles are contradictory in the epistemological scheme of Śankara. But a well-disciplined dialectician can see that, on one side, they are complementary and reciprocal, and on the other, they have the quality of the Taoist *yin* and *yang* - the opposites cancel each other out to arrive at a neutral zero of contemplative significance.

Such a position has been sensed by Western philosophers and theologians like St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinus, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Husserl, Heidegger and Jaspers, and more clearly and vividly by Bergson. In the *Vedas*, a kind of alchemy happens between the pre-Aryan *Atharva* contemplation and the *Ṛg*, *Yajus*,

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and *Sāma*, the trilogy of the Aryan sacrificial culture. Consequently, certain pre-Aryan concepts enter into Aryan literature almost in the same way as pagan concepts of ancient Europe entered into Christian theology. The concepts of *hiraṇyagarbha* and *prajāpati* and the unitive vision of the Absolute as an all-embracing person are found in a nucleic state in the *Ṛg Veda*. However, when the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* presents cosmic hunger (*vaiśvānara*), and the potential for the manifestation of a phenomenal universe (*hiraṇyagarbha*), the rishi does not make any reference to the origin of these concepts. If we read the *Ṛg Veda* along with the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we can see how the Vedic concepts percolate into the *Upaniṣad*.

The primal phase mentioned by the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is ignorance. Like the modern scientist, the *Upaniṣad* entirely bases its arguments on the grounds of necessity which evolves into the dichotomy of cause and effect. The germ of the later development of theism can be seen in the concept of the first phenomenal appearance of hunger which aspires to have a problem-solving device in the form of mind. This is the first admission of spirit into the matrix of the physical and the phenomenal. This germ of both the biologic being and the cosmos sown in the first mantra of the third *brāhmaṇa* is afterwards elaborated into the rich poetic premises of an elaborate world of inexhaustible potentials. It includes the physical world and a labyrinth of cause and effect ramifications with astounding physical, physiological, psychological and spiritual significance. The first marriage of spiritual and physical elements comes in the form of the functional factor of the vital breath *(prāṇa)* being placed in a position of central importance so that it can ultimately transform the elemental, physical, quantitative, gross aspects of the phenomenal into the causal, spiritual, theistic immortality that links heaven and earth with a teleologic purposefulness. Every word we utter is an epitomization of all the analytical principles that are neatly arranged to present a world picture ranging from hunger to the concept of immortal being. The immortality of the Self is established, item by item, by the *prāṇa* using the technique of *udgītha* in which knowledge is fused with energy.

The combining of biologic factors with the psycho-physiologic implications of our enquiry will naturally branch into the psycho-physical, bio-chemical, psycho-chemical, and socio-biological sciences. At this stage, we can only direct the student to seek out

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for himself or herself these great fields of exploration which are not mentioned in the *Upaniṣads* by name. However, a philosophically disciplined mind can intuitively trace the sources and courses of these very fascinating studies. We can summarize the whole problem in a simple question, put by Thomas Aquinus: "What is a blade of grass?"

In the introduction of Sureśvara's *Vārtika* on the *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa*, we are given a familiarization with a number of terms which are associated with the *udgītha*. The *Karmakāṇḍa*, or ritualistic aspect of the *Veda*, is formed by the *Ṛg*, *Yajus*, and *Sāma*. In the *Sāma Veda*, mantras are musically rendered for the purpose of being used as group liturgy. This is called *Sāmagāna*, the hymns of the *Sāma*. The song consists of five parts. It begins with the singing of the *pṛastotṛ* priest. The beginning of the recitation is called *upakrama*, meaning "Introduction." It consists of the recitation of *him* or *hum* and is called *hiṁkāra*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, which directly belongs to the *Sāma Veda*, introduces a white dog called Śunaka as a preceptor teaching small puppies lessons in *hiṁkāra*. Śunaka is also referred to as a highly revered rishi. In any case, what we may understand here is the announcement that the *hiṁkāra* is the introductory part. It is given as a song by the *pṛastotṛ* priest and called *prastāva* (announcement). Then follows the most important part of the song. It is sung by the *udgātṛ* priest on a tone higher than that of the *prastāva*. This is the *udgītha*. Then the concluding part of the song is sung by the *pratihartṛ* priest and called *pratihara*. And finally, all these three priests together recite the ending part of the song on a low tone. This is called *nidhāna*. In these details of the five-fold *sāmagāna*, it should be noted that the *udgītha* is taken in the *Sāma Vedic* tradition as the most important and potent part of chanting. To have a detailed understanding of the five parts of the *sāmagāna*, please refer to the first chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. In that, the *udgītha* is given as the essence of the *sāma* songs. There is a close resemblance between the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which identifies *prāṇa* with *udgītha* and the *udgītha* section of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The *prāṇa* which manifests as the very nucleus of both the elements and life, and afterwards of the mind and the word, is the minutest beginning of the microcosm which will ultimately grow into the entire theme of biologic, psychologic, and social elaboration in sentient beings. It is also seen as the nucleic ori-

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origin of the cosmic bodies such as the stars and galaxies. Thus a close study of the *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa* is essential to understand the various subjects that are elaborated in the first chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

The historical evolution of science and technology has reference to time in human history, but the laws of science, the principles of cause and effect, the inherence of corollaries and coordinates, the theorems of mathematics and their consequent riders and lemmas have more reference to eternal aspects of truth. The mantras we are dealing with refer to an archaic time when even the physical elements were only beginning to come together from their basic constituents to give the primordial being shape, structure, function and meaning. In that early dawn of manifestation, human beings were not present. So we cannot expect that there was a team of priests to perform an *udgītha* ritual. The ritualistic ensemble evolved later.

The first mantra of the second *brāhmaṇa* marks the very first origin of phonemics when hunger desired to have a body (*ātmā*) with a mind. There cannot be any mind without the articulation of words. "Word" in Sanskrit is *pāda* which also means the foot with which one paces one's steps. The word is the very first step in the evolution of language. A word has reference to the perceptual figure of an object and a conceptual fixation of the regularized impression of the perceived which is held in memory as a specific unit. The memory tags are held by names. Therefore, the preservative mark of identification of a previously experienced object is inlaid in the psycho-dynamics of the name given to it. Nature gives a child a lot of time to imbibe the language of its parents by listening, seeing, and mentally observing the identifiable mark of each thing. Much discipline is required to make every nominal reference coincide precisely with the formal structure and functional presentation of the object that is again and again recalled for transactional purposes. It is therefore likely that speech will be correct or incorrect, well-intonated or blurred in accordance with how well one is disciplined in the process of familiarizing oneself with the word images with which the language, and consequently the mind, are gradually structured and nourished. As speech is thus the most important beginning of the transactions of a living being, the *devas* are shown in the beginning of the third *brāhmaṇa* appealing first to the organ of speech to perform the *udgītha* to save humans from the attack of

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the demons.

The second attempt was made by the nasal breath through which the sensation of smell comes. The conceptualization of smell also could be distorted by the demonic rivals. Third came the eyes. Even today, after several million years of training, the eyes err and cause visual illusions. So it is needless to say that at the beginning of visual experience, the eyes went wrong in conceptualizing the identifiable characteristics of unique images. Fourth in order was the ear. While the eye is intimately connected with perception, the ear is connected with conception. Right from the beginning, the achievements of human beings succeeded or failed in accordance with the coordinations established between a perceptual figure and its conceptual description. Instructions and the implementation of instructions psychologically coordinate the formal with the nominal, and vice versa. This is an area of performance where the most competent will also find several hazards of performance. The mind also failed against the demonic forces. Ultimately, the chief vital breath which is in the mouth undertook the performance of the *udgītha*. It succeeded. The secret of its success is given as its neutral and non-affective nature. There is no duality in its functioning. It is identical with the supreme law of manifestation by which every cause is led to its unfoldment in consequential effects. *Prāṇa*, the primary cause of manifestation, is looked upon as the essence of the lord of manifestation (*prajāpati*), only when its correct function gives the senses and the mind the ability to be promoted into longevity. After being identified as the sustainer of life in mantra nine, its service to the corporeal being is recognized as the distance it brings in the life of an individuated being between its birth and its death. That distance is specifically called "*dur*," meaning "the delayer of death." It sets the biological conditions for avoiding disease and death through a discipline of non-association with death-inducing elements and environments.

All embodied beings are mortal. In the manifested world, humans are the ultimate. This embodied state consists of the five physical elements: earth, water, fire, air, and space. The liaison between a person's physical body and the spirit is maintained through the three modalities of nature: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. These modalities are like a mirror which enables the spirit to articulate through the senses and the mind. The triple qualities have three degrees of reflective powers. *Sattva* is pure

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and correct in mirroring an image. *Rajas* is of a distorting nature. It can come under the influence either of *sattva* or *tamas*. When it is affected by *sattva*, it enhances the pleasure element into an infatuated state of binding attachment to the object of pleasure. When *rajas* is under the influence of *tamas*, it exaggerates the painful aspect and causes violent aversion to the object as reflected in the individuated self (*puruṣa*). Then the person goes into deep anguish and inconsolable misery. *Tamas* only obscures. It is opaque by nature and, instead of showing a mirrored reflection, shows only an absence of the Self. Thus it cuts off the individuated self from any benefit that can be derived from the luminosity of the Self.

Corresponding to the five elements are the *tanmātras*: the essence of hearing (*śabda-tanmātra*), the essence of touching (*sparśa-tanmātra*), the essence of seeing (*rūpa-tanmātra*), the essence of tasting (*rasa-tanmātra*) and the essence of smelling (*ghrāna-tanmātra*). The elements are also graded according to their subtlety or grossness. The most gross are the *ghrāna-tanmātra* of earth and the *rasa-tanmātra* of water. When death comes to the individuated self, the first two sensibilities that are dropped are the abilities to smell and to taste. Air and space are subtle elements which function in a wider field than the other elements. Air has an extraterrestrial presence and function, and space fills the whole universe.

The individuated person is conceived of as having three bodies. First is the *stūlaśarīra* which consists of the body nourished by food and the element air in the physical breathing which goes into the digestive function. In verses two to ten, we have seen how the vital breath caused a distance between the birth of a being and its death. In mantra eleven, the vital breath removes the partially-saved faculties of the embodied self beyond death. To go beyond death is a process of attaining immortality. Immortality comes to individuated life when it re-enters a body and comes back for further processing to perfection in this world. For that purpose, two other grades of bodies are conceived: the subtle body and the causal body. In the *prāṇa*, there is a subtle aspect of air. The mind is derived from the moon which is intimate in relation with the sun. *Prāṇa* and the moon (*candra*), are conceived to be the basis of the subtle body (*sūksmaśarīra*). The two products of the subtle body, consciousness (*vijñāna*) and the mirroring of the *ānanda* or blissful state of the Self, go into the mak-

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ing of the causal body.

That implies a three-fold gradation of reduction. The gross is reduced to the subtle, the subtle is reduced to the causal, and the causal is reduced to have the power of transcendence so that it can transmigrate from one body to another. In the process of the first reduction, the faculties of audition, touch, sight, taste, and smell go out of commission. The person no longer has the service of the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue, or the nose. Consequently, the physical relationship between the mind and the senses through the physiological devices of the brain and the nervous system, and the operational devices of the senses are all reduced to nought. However, the essence of the impressions made by the senses remain in the memory faculty of the subtle body. As these are reduced to be accommodated in the causal body, all the specific occurrences which have brought impressions to the mind are scrapped. Then only the cultured aspects of the impressions *(saṃskāra)* are maintained in highly-reduced psychic carriers. These have in them the mind-stuff and the value factors connected with the mind-stuff. In the final stage of all the five *prāṇas* leaving the person, the psychic elements are further reduced so that the individuated person carries only the essence of *vijñāna* and *ānanda* to formulate a new embodied life. It is here we should take into account the *Upaniṣadic* statement that the immortal aspect of the vital breath gave a new degree of transcendence to the faculties of the causal body to go beyond physical death.

Physical death automatically brings vital death and mental death. The immortalization of the individual happens in a two-fold manner. One is the transference of the essence of what the *puruṣa* has achieved with its mind and organs of perception and action to the cognitive memory of the collective mind of all people who happened to be influenced by the activities of the person. This is an immortality which is enjoyed by the ancient teachers (rishis), the prophets, the saviors and other benefactors of humanity. Born into the memory of the universal psyche, Buddha and Jesus are still remembered as if they are living spirits with us. Death has not affected their power to influence humanity.

The other aspect of immortalization occurs when the residual essence of a person reaches forward to be physically embodied in a new person with contributory genes with identical culturing (*saṃskāra*) which can be utilized to continue the tendencies pre-

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viously lived in the cast-off body. This aspect of eschatology is still in a state of speculation although it has to some extent been described by the science of genetics as a psycho-physiological extension of the biologic process of continuation through progeny.

We should especially notice mantras twelve onwards in the third *brāhmaṇa*. Mantra twelve says, "The vital force first carried beyond death the organ of speech, the foremost of the group. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the well-known fire." A common principle of unification is found for the perpetuation of speech which has an allegoric relationship with fire through a principle of homogeneity. Speech examines the truth of other people's speech. Like fire, it burns away falsehood and maintains truth. In verse thirteen, we read, "Then it carried the nose beyond death. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the air. The air having transcended death, was beyond it." Here the *prāṇa* transcends death by being related to the element air which has an extra-terrestrial function. In mantra fourteen we read, "Then it carried the eye beyond death. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the sun. That sun, having transcended death, shines beyond it." In this mantra, the faculty of seeing transcends death because of its power to see perceptual things illuminated by the sun and conceptual truth illuminated by meaning. In mantra fifteen, we read, "Then it carried the ear beyond death. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the directions. Those directions, having transcended death, remain beyond it." In the theory of manifestation, the earth came from water, water from fire, fire from air, and air from space (*ākāśa*). The directions evolved from space to which the vibratory function of sound belongs. So it is only natural that the transcendence of the ear is through the homogeneity of space.

In verse sixteen, we read, "Then it carried the mind beyond death. When the latter was delivered from death, it became the moon. That moon, having transcended death, shines beyond it. So indeed does this deity carry beyond death one who knows thus." There is a subtlety in relating the mind with the moon. The very first thing the primordial being of hunger wished for, according to this *Upaniṣad*, was the mind. Mind alone has the power to know, but knowing comes from objectifying. Objectification is a process in which a thing is first rendered into its image. Images are made with the contrast of light and darkness.

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The moon mirrors the light it receives from the sun. Although we see only the reflected light of the sun, the moon image looks real to us. The same principle of illumination and reflection is implied in knowing everything that is relatively real. The unreal gains the relative status of the real through the objectification of imagery. For example when people have died, they are often represented in their homes with photographs or a death masks. So it is very appropriate to relate the mind with the moon.

In mantra seventeen we read, "Then it obtained edibles for itself by singing. For whatever food is consumed by creatures is consumed by the vital force itself, and this resides in that food." This is the most intriguing mantra of this chapter. To establish the principle of transmigration for every person (*purūṣa*) who has departed, there has to be a descending essence of the same self to re-enter the living body of a person or another living organism through the mechanism of fertilization. Hence, it is held that the essence of a person which has entered the astral planes as a causal body re-enters edibles such as corn, rice, wheat, green vegetables, or fish. The edible is the link between a departed soul and persons living on earth. These mantras present an entire scheme of death, reduction, mutation through reduction, and re-entry of the dead into the stream of life. However, these details are not given in any of the previous commentaries. Certain helpful hints are available in Sureśvara's *Vārtika*.

It is said in the *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa* that the shining principles of the faculties of the individuated person are taken beyond death by the *udgītha* of the principal vital breath which sits in the mouth (*ayāsya*). This breath is also the nourisher of all limbs and inner faculties, so it represents the essence of life. For that reason, it is called *āṅgirasa*. The song with which the *ayāsya* and the *āṅgirasa* achieved immortality is given as:

asato mā sadgamaya
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya
mṛtyor mā amṛtamgamaya

From non-existence, lead us to existence
From darkness, lead us to light
From death, lead us to immortality.

In fact, the entire theme of this *Upaniṣad* is summarized in

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this *udgītha mantra*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the *praṇava* (the mystic symbol *AUM)* and the *gāyatrī* are given as *udgītha mantras*. *Gāyatrī* is an invocation addressed to the god of light. Whether the *udgāna* is the *praṇava*, the *gāyatrī*, or the above-given mantra, two dynamic principles have to combine to achieve the desired result. One is the sentience which is none other than the pure Self; the other is the energy of knowledge roused from the Self that can become a modulating substance which mirrors an exact replica of the word images employed in the invocation.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* commences its presentation with the problem of hunger which is seen as the only overall truth. The solution the *Upaniṣad* projects to meet hunger is the manifestation of *prajāpati* as a reality out of non-existence. Hence, the opening sentence of the *udgītha mantra* states, "From non-existence bring us to existence." The primeval hunger was like a shroud of darkness which prevented all forms of knowledge. Hence, in the second line, we read, "From darkness bring us to light." As hunger was identical to death, we read in the third line, "From death bring us to immortality."

When the *prajāpati* came into being, it had in it the contending forces of light and darkness, the *devas* and the *asuras*. Consequently, the danger of imminent death was still there. The prayer could be fulfilled only if a breathing space was given to *prajāpati* to program its future. This was accomplished first by creating distance between birth and death. Thereafter, discipline was to be given to the senses and mind, which are identified with *devas*, to enable the *prajāpati* to transcend death. The discipline combined both the power to know and the power to desire correctly. Both these powers are dormant in the sentience which is none other than one's own Self.

In Greek, knowledge of the Self is considered to be the same as *gnosis*. The Greek *gnosis* is the same as the Sanskrit *jñāna*. The philological affinity between these two terms is striking. The sounds of *jñāna* and *gnosis* appear in the English words, knowledge, cognition and recognition. The furtherance of knowledge is always through pondering or meditation (*dhyāna*). *Dhyāna* means "repeatedly going to the same objective vision so that one may know it more and more comprehensively." This requires effort. Effort is the application of energy. *Prāṇa* is the reservoir of energy which is channeled purposively through several routes in the biologic system. The different aspects of the process of trans-

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forming ideas into sound symbols, word symbols and picture symbols have become an elaborate science of semantics. The spoken words referred to here are either prayers or requests to find the provisions of life, or praises of gratitude.

Although there is an implied duality in making a prayer or expressing gratitude, the relationship between the divinity prayed to and the person who prays are like that of the numerator and the denominator of a fraction. The numerator is the conspicuous factor. The denominator is the base. The prayer that is heard is only the prayer that is made. The ultimate result of the prayer is postulated by the person who prays. This can be exemplified with the illustration of a potter making a pot or a weaver making linen. It is the prayer of the potter that a particular kind of pot should emerge from the clay he's fashioning. At every step, the spirit of the prayer guides the fingertips of the potter to fashion the perfection of the pot which he envisions through his prayer. The consequent result is the accomplishment of the pot. It is as if his prayer is granted. It came from his own effort; it was as if he prayed to himself, and he granted the prayer by transforming himself into the appropriate power of beneficence. His appreciation of the handiwork he has made is the praise offered in gratitude. In the context of work, there is instruction and the carrying out of instruction. These are complementary. In the prayer, the first half of each sentence is the complementary part of the second half. The first half is "Out of non-existence;" the second half is "bring us to existence." Similarly, "Out of darkness, bring us to light." And "Out of mortality, bring us to immortality." Only in the structure is there a semblance of duality. In the totality of the vision and accomplishment, there is only a unitive function.

These details were not worked out during the days of the composition of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* or in later commentaries. However, a valiant attempt was made by the Indian logicians, Buddhist logicians (both of India and China), and the semanticists of the *Pūrvamīmāmsā* school. A more or less finalized conclusion was arrived at later by the *Pratyabhijña Śāstra* of Kashmir Śaivism and the revaluation of Vedānta made by several later Vedāntins of which the most recent were Chattampi Swami and Narayana Guru in their respective books, *Advaita Cinta Paddhati*, *Nyānanda Vilāsam*, *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, *Advaita Dīpika*, and *Darśana Mālā*.

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APPENDIX III

The Story of Maitreyī

The story of Maitreyī is one of the most fascinating legends connected with the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The events of the story probably took place in the first half of the second millennium B.C. The location of the legend was probably the outskirts of the city of *Janakapura* near *Mithila* where Sīta, the heroine of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, was born. Ancient *Janakapura* was a center of great learning patronized by the royal rishi Janaka. The story begins with the presentation of three men, two of whom could be identified as *kṣatriyās* by their outward attire, and the third a rishi. The rishi was Mitra. The two *kṣatriyās* had probably been deputed by the king to accompany the ascetic. They were all on the road returning to their respective homes after visiting the city. One of the *kṣatriyās* turned to the ascetic and said: "Sir, ever since you returned from Kāśi, you have been very thoughtful and somewhat dejected in your demeanor. If we are not taking too much freedom with you, we would like to know what disturbs your mind." Hearing this kind enquiry, Mitra said, "Yajña Datta and Viṣṇu Mitra, you are my best friends. I have nothing to hide from you. In fact after the Vedic assembly, Viṣṇu Mitra became concerned about my silence. I wanted to speak out my mind to him. But I did not find an opportune moment. Now is a good time to confide to you some of my disturbing intimate thoughts."

Yajña: I do not know the gathering you are speaking of. I was not there.

Viṣṇu: You really missed a great conference of Vedic deliberation. I have never seen anything of that sort in my life.

Yajña: May I know who were the great scholars who addressed the gathering?

Viṣṇu: That conference was a challenge to every scholar of great repute. So nobody remained quiet. What was most astounding in the conference were the questions put by Gārgi to

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Yājñavalkya and his scholarly rebuttal which was admired by all.

Yajña: What was the argument about?

Viṣṇu: There was no controversy scheduled in the agenda. From every quarter of the conference hall, questions came like a continuous shower of arrows. To meet each question, the great rishi, Yājñavalkya had to go into different subjects of topical interest. Gārgi mainly spoke of the omnipresence of the Absolute. Uddālaka spoke of the Absolute as the immanent immortality of the Self. To lovers of wisdom, it was a rare experience. I want to refresh my memory of that splendid day so that I can tell you in detail all that the scholars earnestly discussed.

Yajña: Why did so many people attack Yājñavalkya, and why was he solitarily put on the hot seat?

Viṣṇu: I am afraid that his initial attitude was adventurous and provocative. Ultimately the provocation served the good purpose of showing how much Yājñavalkya understands the various principles that govern the Science of the Absolute. Although Yājñavalkya is considered to be a great scholar, he is only a little over thirty years old. The fact that such a young man could break away from the venerable old sage Vaiśampāyana and initiate a new school of *Yājūrveda* was a good enough reason for many to feel offended by his behavior.

Rishi Mitra: It is true that Yājñavalkya described Vaiśampāyana's school as *Kṛṣṇa Yājūrveda*. The ritualistic injunctions and philosophical principles got mixed up in Vaiśampāyana's teaching, and it lacked the proper application of a sound methodology. That was one reason why Yājñavalkya took the initiative to restate and revaluate *Kṛṣṇa Yājūrveda* and call his school *Śukla Yājūrveda*. What provoked the assembly to feel annoyed with Yājñavalkya was another issue.

Viṣṇu: Yes. Before the commencement of the conference, the king decorated a thousand cows with gold, and he made an open request to those who assembled there: "Any of you who consider yourself the best among the knowers of the Absolute can take these cows home as a gift."

Yajña: Oh, how embarrassing! How could anyone say that he was the best among the knowers of the Absolute?

Viṣṇu: Well, Yājñavalkya did not hesitate to stand up immediately, and he simply asked his disciples to lead the thousand cows away to his *āśram*.

Yajña: How odd. How could he be so adamant?

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Rishi Mitra: Of course, nobody liked his attitude. Some people became red in the face. Then Ashwala, the chief priest of King Janaka, got up, rather infuriated, and asked Yājñavalkya by which reason he came to conclude that he was the best among the knowers of the Absolute. On hearing this, Yājñavalkya politely said, "I give my reverence to all lovers of truth. That does not stop me from desiring these beautiful cows. If you think I was impertinent, you are most welcome to question me. If I do not answer you, then you can naturally conclude that I was unworthy to desire this great gift."

Yajña: You are now speaking about Yājñavalkya and the conference. May I know what that has to do with your troubled mind?

Rishi Mitra: It is not the conference that is haunting my mind. I am troubled because of what happened to my daughter who was also present there. She's just eighteen. It is now time for her to be given in marriage to a suitable person.

Yajña: I do not understand what the problem is. Your daughter is one of the most beautiful girls in our families. Furthermore, you have given her a great education. Her oratorical powers are not inferior to those of her great aunt, Gārgi. Such being the case, it should be easy to find an appropriate bridegroom for her.

Rishi Mitra: It is not because of the lack of worthy young men in our country that I cannot find a bridegroom for her. The greatest hurdle is the very education I gave her.

Yajña: How is that?

Rishi Mitra: Ever since Yājñavalkya left the school of Vaiśampāyana, he has been contemplating setting up of a new school of *Yājurveda*. For that, we meet every day in our *āśram* with the purpose of structuring an epistemological scheme of correlation which can ultimately lead one to the highest realization of the Self. He is very keen that every argument we include should help form an explicit methodology for relating the pros with the cons. Almost every day, Gārgi is also present in our deliberations. Being an honored scholar, Gārgi is given a seat in the philosophers' circle. My daughter desires to sit as close as possible to Gārgi. But she is seated with the other females, from where she cannot properly listen and take part in the daily discussions.

Yajña: Do you think that your daughter is following the foot-

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steps of Gārgi, and also resolving to be a *brahmacārinī*?

Rishi Mitra: It is obvious. She is very intent on accepting the disciplines of an anchorite. Perhaps she would agree to a compromise if Yājñavalkya would accept her as a co-wife with his wife, Kātyāyanī.

Yajña: I do not see how Yājñavalkya can reject such a brilliant young woman who cherishes his own high ideals and wisdom.

Rishi Mitra: You do not know much about the domestic life of Yājñavalkya. His wife, my best friend Kāttiyā's daughter, is almost an ideal match for him. She's a woman of great virtue and beauty, and she has a great ability to manage the *āśram*. If you once speak to her, you'll be convinced of her innocence and purity. She's generous to all, and makes everyone feel the most cherished guest of the *āśram*. If you go to her with a sad heart, she will rekindle courage and hope in you. Even if Kātyāyanī agrees to accept my daughter, it will surely be an interference in Yājñavalkya's domestic life.

Yajña Datta: When you spoke of Kātyāyanī, you said she's almost an ideal match for Yājñavalkya. Why did you say 'almost'?

Rishi Mitra: Although as a wife she complements Yājñavalkya in every way, she has little interest in his philosophical speculations. In that respect, she's quite a contrast to Gārgi.

Rishi Mitra and his two *kṣatriyā* friends came to a valley. Not far from where they stood, they saw a small hillock. Seeing a figure seated on the top of the hillock, Rishi Mitra tried to make out who the person was. He decided that the man who was sitting silent was none other than Yājñavalkya. For a moment he stood there filled with doubt. Darkness was slowly increasing. There was a tiger walking towards the man who was absorbed in meditation. Mitra showed the tiger to the *kṣatriyās* who were armed with bows and arrows. Both the *kṣatriyās* took aim at the tiger and shot their arrows simultaneously. Instantly the tiger fell. They rushed to the animal and made sure that it was no longer dangerous. When the beast fell dead, it also made a terrible noise which disturbed the man who was sitting there. He got up and recognized his saviors. In the meantime, Rishi Mitra also reached the spot. Yājñavalkya fell to the feet of the old rishi. He was speechless with gratitude. Yājñavalkya embraced his two saviors, and they all decided to return home.

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Co-Wives

Rishi Mitra was a man of high ideals and deep understanding. Even though he was responsible for saving Yājñavalkya's life, he did not expect any gratitude from the young rishi. Rishi Mitra wanted Maitreyī to be married, but he did not speak of it, even to his family members. The women of the families of Rishi Mitra and Yājñavalkya would occasionally visit each other. Kātyāyanī was very drawn to Maitreyī. She noticed that Maitreyī was a very introverted person, and she suspected that she was nurturing some frustration in her mind. Maitreyī had many services to perform in her father's āśram. Sometimes Kātyāyanī would help Maitreyī in her domestic duties. One day, while they were sitting down in a restful mood, the following conversation took place between them:

Kātyāyanī: Now we have become like sisters. I am wondering what I would do if you were given away in marriage to someone who lives far away. If such a separation happens, I'll be very sad. I may even die of sorrow.

Maitreyī: I do not think such a thing will ever happen.

Kātyāyanī: What do you mean? Did your father arrange for your marriage with someone who is living close by?

Maitreyī: I do not think I will ever get married.

Kātyāyanī: Why? You are so young and beautiful. I suppose you are in the heart of every young man. Many will be pressuring your father to give you to them in marriage.

Maitreyī: But nobody is in my heart. My thoughts are not about marriage.

Kātyāyanī: But, for a woman, domestic life is ideal.

Maitreyī: Domestic life is good not only for women, but also for men. When people speak of domestic life for women, they see woman as a beast of burden. In their estimates, woman is good only to cook and keep the house for her husband.

Kātyāyanī: What else should a woman do, according to you? Do you think women should lead a religious life? Even that is a family matter. Nobody stops a woman from religious duties such as observing fasts and reciting prayers.

Maitreyī: Does that mean that woman has no Self? Should she also not realize her Self? Should knowledge and wisdom always be alien to a woman?

Kātyāyanī: To become a scholar and be erudite regarding the

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scriptures is for men only. Your aunt, Gārgī, is a rare exception.

Maitreyī: Why? Do you think that men alone have the Self?

Kātyāyanī: Of course, in the matter of Self, men and women are alike. We also see and hear and speak because we have the Self.

Maitreyī: Is the Self the same for men and women, or do men have a little more of it?

Kātyāyanī: I suppose in that matter, men and women are equal.

Maitreyī: There is no liberation without Self-knowledge. I don't think I should teach this to Yājñavalkya's wife.

Kātyāyanī: Yes, yes. I also know that there is no liberation without knowledge.

Maitreyī: If that is so, both women and men should aspire for Self-knowledge.

Kātyāyanī: Of course it should be so.

Maitreyī: Then how is it that we women forget this most important duty and think it is only for men to acquire Self-knowledge? Men and women are both motivated by the acquisition of righteousness (*dharma*), riches (*artha*), and fulfillment of desires (*kāma*), but even then, men never forget that they have liberation (*mokṣa*) for their ultimate goal. Hardly any woman finds it necessary to liberate herself in this very life.

Kātyāyanī: My dear Maitreyī, your words are inspiring. They open my eyes too. There are a few differences between men and women, but these differences are very much exaggerated by our society. As you said, women have miserably failed in programing their lives. My own husband several times pointed out to me that I should raise my self with my Self. At that time I did not understand what he was trying to do.

Maitreyī: How lucky you are to have a husband who is always thinking of the highest truth, whose thoughts are sublime and subtle. In our society, a woman is free to choose her husband. Even so, most women look for rich men who are physically strong and care only for bodily pleasures. Only once in a while does one woman out of a million choose a husband like yours. His very presence will help you to come out of the rut of *samsāra*.

At that point, a servant came and announced that a palanquin had arrived to take Kātyāyanī back to her āśram. Kātyāyanī did not realize that she had spent such a long time conversing with Maitreyī. She hurriedly took leave of Maitreyī and got into

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the palanquin, and she was reiterating in her mind every word that came from Maitreyī. She was thinking of how happy Maitreyī might be if Yājñavalkya accepted her as his second wife. An unknown sadness came to her mind when she thought of sharing her husband with another woman. All the same, she wanted to discuss that possibility with Yājñavalkya. Such an alliance would not only help Maitreyī. Kātyāyanī could clearly see how much her own husband's contemplative ideals were in resonance with Maitreyī's. At the thought of a complete family where she could continue her domestic services while Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī could meditate together, Kātyāyanī became convinced that it would be ideal to have her in the family as a sister through wedlock. Finally she decided to inform Yājñavalkya of her desire to have Maitreyī as a co-wife.

Yājñavalkya: This is very strange. It is not normal for a woman to suggest to her husband to marry another. Will you not regret it afterwards?

Kātyāyanī: Never in my life. I'll be very sad if you reject my proposal.

Yājñavalkya: Will you not feel jealous?

Kātyāyanī: I know how firm your love is for me. Nothing can change it. She will never be my rival.

Yājñavalkya: How do you know that in the future I would not come to have more love for her than I have for you?

Kātyāyanī: I know that you are a man of strong character and high ideals.

Yājñavalkya: But human nature is such that changes can come in spite of oneself.

Kātyāyanī: If such is human nature, I should accept it. If she has greater virtues to be admired, she deserves to be loved more. Did you not tell me several times that a wife is loved not for the sake of the wife, but for the sake of the Self? And a husband is loved not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of the Self? I have given my thoughts to it, and I am convinced.

Yājñavalkya: It seems that my desire to get another wife is much less than your desire to get a co-wife.

After several such dialogues between Kātyāyanī and Yājñavalkya, Kātyāyanī succeeded in arranging for a public ceremony in which Maitreyī became the legally wedded wife of the rishi. The coming of Maitreyī into the family of Yājñavalkya was a great event. Kātyāyanī was only twenty-two, barely four years

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older than Maitreyī, so it was easy for them to think of each other as sisters. What made the new household harmonious was the spectacular differences between the two wives of Yājñavalkya. Instead of causing conflict between them, their differences contributed to complementarity and reciprocity. Kātyāyanī had a sense of belongingness to the family, and every item of the household was precious to her. She had a meticulous mind to schedule each day's program on a minute-to-minute basis. She was physically very energetic and had a way of doing things with an expertise that no one could beat. She was totally dedicated to care for every physical need of Yājñavalkya and their children. Although she was not inclined to any special religious discipline or ritual, she always knew the contemplative requirements of her husband. Kātyāyanī was willing to extend her concern to the spiritual needs of her new sister in spirit. Kātyāyanī was like a lyric full of imaginative exuberance. She had a high sensibility to feel the needs of others. She was easily tickled to laugh, and, almost as easily, her eyes would become moist with tears of compassion. However, it was almost impossible for her to sit and listen to her husband when he elucidated philosophical theories. She used all such occasions to plan for the household, attend to the children, and direct the dependents of the family to engage in useful vocations. Yājñavalkya must have learned a lot of systematization from this blessed wife who was herself like a creatress.

Maitreyī had a sense of poise. Her words seemed to come from a deep source of understanding. She was loving by nature, but she limited it to the few people with whom she related directly such as Yājñavalkya, Kātyāyanī, the two little children of the family, and the disciples of Yājñavalkya who were somewhat awed by the high spiritual attainment of the rishi. Her face was more grave and serious than that of Kātyāyanī. She was willing to spend a few hours every day with Kātyāyanī and the children. However, she was more interested in listening to the philosophical subtleties expounded by her husband. As she had been deeply disciplined and educated by her revered father, her transfer to Yājñavalkya's āśram was like a continuation of her spiritual education. As she never came in the way of Kātyāyanī in exercising her rights or her claims over her husband, Kātyāyanī doted on Maitreyī as if she was an angel from heaven who came to share her resplendence with the family. She was like a gentle light with an unflickering flame.

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The Discipline of Discriminating Between the Self and the Non-Self

Fifteen days passed. The living room where the muni recited his prayers and spent his leisurely hours with his wives was called the *tapograha*. It was different from the living rooms of other family houses. It was a place where the rishi shared his discipline with his wives. Both in the morning and in the evening, the ritual of the burnt sacrifice took place in that part of the house. The room was so constructed that the smoke of the sacrifice and of the incense sticks could easily go out into the open. As Yājñavalkya still belonged to the school of the *Yajur Veda*, he was willing to make offerings to the *devas*. He saw the *devas* more as symbols of psychic energies than as actual gods, and so he was not always very charitable in accepting the traditional concept. The rishi was more interested in the all-embracing Self, and he did not like to mix up philosophical verities with traditional stories of make-believe.

That evening, Maitreyī took the initiative of presenting the subject for discussion. She looked into the eyes of Yājñavalkya almost entreatingly and said, "Shall we discuss *that* today?"

Kātyāyanī: What do you mean by 'that'? When you make such references, I don't have the least idea what you have in your mind.

Yājñavalkya: Maitreyī is very interested in knowing the unitive aspect of the Self. From the day of her marriage, she was requesting me to explain the unitiveness of the Self.

Kātyāyanī: When we do not know what the Self is, should you not first tell us what it is?

Maitreyī: I know what the Self is. I only want to know its unitiveness.

Kātyāyanī: I do not know what the Self is, so it is imperative you should explain that to me first.

Yājñavalkya: Kātyāyanī, why don't you try to understand by yourself what your Self is?

Kātyāyanī: I suppose the Self is what keeps us alive.

Yājñavalkya: What do you mean by 'alive'? How do you describe life? What are the functions of life? What is our objective in living?

Kātyāyanī: Well, we respire because we have life.

Yājñavalkya: Yes, of course. We also eat, drink, digest our

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food. Many are our functions.

Kātyāyanī: Then can I say that the functions with which we satisfy our needs are the Self?

Yājñavalkya: If a function has no consciousness of pain and pleasure, would you call it the Self?

Kātyāyanī: No. Then I would call it only a vegetative being, something which exists.

Yājñavalkya: That means your definition of the Self is too narrow.

Kātyāyanī: Can I say that consciousness is the mark of the Self?

Yājñavalkya: What is consciousness?

Kātyāyanī: Knowing the things around us is consciousness.

Yājñavalkya: Can you give an example?

Kātyāyanī: I see both of you. And I listen to what you say. From that itself it is evident that I have Self-consciousness.

Yājñavalkya: Do you always see what you see now? And do you always hear what you hear now?

Kātyāyanī: No. If I close my eyes or walk away from here, I will not see you. If I become indifferent to what you say or close my ears, then I won't hear.

Yājñavalkya: When you do not see or hear, do you have consciousness?

Kātyāyanī: Yes, of course.

Yājñavalkya: That means you have consciousness even when the senses retire from their objects of interest.

Kātyāyanī: That's right.

Yājñavalkya: When you are not relating yourself to any object, if you still have consciousness, what is the object of that consciousness?

Kātyāyanī: Then I am knowing myself.

Yājñavalkya: That means knowing oneself is implied in the state of consciousness.

Kātyāyanī: Not only knowing oneself, but also knowing the environmental world.

Yājñavalkya: Did you not tell us a little while ago that you have consciousness even when your senses are not operative?

Kātyāyanī: Yes, I did say that.

Yājñavalkya: It is imperative that we should have the knowledge of ourselves even when we do not distinctly recognize any object of knowledge.

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Kātyāyanī: You're making this complicated. Sometimes I know what pertains to the senses. Sometimes I think of myself. That means consciousness oscillates between objects of the senses and the Self within.

Maitreyī: When we know the senses, do we also not know the Self?

Kātyāyanī: Sometimes we know, sometimes we do not.

Maitreyī: It's not like that. When I see the muni, I clearly know that I am seeing him, and also I clearly know that I am the perceiver.

Kātyāyanī: I do not know what kind of seeing you have. When I see my husband, I forget everything, including myself.

On hearing this, the muni could not hide a smile. It was this selfless love of Kātyāyanī that made her so precious to him. He also knew that Maitreyī never lost her Self-consciousness at any time. Her Self was always transparent. In the case of Kātyāyanī, she became easily overwhelmed with emotions when it came to a matter of love.

Yājñavalkya: It is all very good, Kātyāyanī, that you sometimes forget about yourself when you think of the objects of your interest. Afterwards do you remember what happens?

Kātyāyanī: Yes, I do.

Yājñavalkya: When you recognize an object, do you also remember that you did experience it once?

Kātyāyanī: Yes, I remember.

Yājñavalkya: That means you sometimes remember your Self as a subject which related itself with a certain object.

Kātyāyanī: Yes.

Maitreyī: But how can you remember something which you have not known once?

Kātyāyanī: Not known once? What do you mean?

Maitreyī: Just now you said that when you see your husband, you forget yourself. Then how do you recollect that experience?

Kātyāyanī: Yes, I said it like that. But I do not completely forget myself. For a while I do not remember, then I remember. Is there any contradiction in that?

Maitreyī: What you have not known you can never remember because remembrance is a reiteration of what you have known.

Kātyāyanī: When I experience or know an object of interest, I

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may not simultaneously think of myself first as knower. Does that mean that I cannot recall any of those experiences?

Maitreyī: Remembering a past experience implies that you as the subject had that experience as your objectified knowledge. Otherwise you cannot reproduce it.

Kātyāyanī: I understand what you say. But it is quite puzzling to me. I have to think about it again. It seems your argument is unassailable, but it is unlikely that we will always add to our minds when we see, hear and think, statements like, "I am seeing, I am hearing, I am thinking, etc." Actually we don't. Only once in a while do we identify with our subject.

Maitreyī: I agree with you that we do not speak to ourselves in so many words, but a corresponding idea is present in our minds as a parallel subjective phenomena. However inexplicit our recognition of perception is, it is there, all the same. My father used to say this repeatedly when I was with him.

Kātyāyanī: I have also heard this before, but I never understood. Now, I do not know how this discussion is related with our earlier enquiry.

Maitreyī: This talk is still very relevant. Only a little while ago you agreed that consciousness is implied in knowing the senses and also in knowing the Self. When we know the sense objects and when we know the Self, in either case, the Self is the knower, and we are conscious of it.

Kātyāyanī: In that case, we should say that Self-consciousness is of two forms. One is a continuous knowledge of the Self without any break whatsoever. The second is a piecemeal knowledge of subject/object duality. Shall we say that our sense perception is our disconnected knowledge?

Maitreyī: Why do you think that objective knowledge is disconnected and transient?

Kātyāyanī: Objective knowledge is not present in the Self all the time. When I see my husband, I forget you. I do not see you. In the same way, when I relate with you, I may not be relating myself with my husband.

Maitreyī: There is a recurrence of the knowledge of things we have known before, and also I recollect when I see objects which I have seen before. I not only recollect, I also remember the time, location and circumstance in which I have seen what I am recognizing now. So it is evident that objective knowledge is as permanent as is knowledge of the Self.

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Kātyāyanī: Objective knowledge comes and goes, while the knowledge of the Self remains the same.

Yājñavalkya: When the knowledge of a special cognizance disappears, its corresponding identity in the Self as the knower of that object also vanishes, so we can say that Self-consciousness, like objective consciousness, is also impermanent.

Maitreyī: When I come to know a new object or a new theory, I also recognize it as something I have not experienced previously. Here the comparison is happening in my knowledge of what I was before the experience, and what I have become after the experience. I clearly see my Self as the participant of the objects of senses, and also I know how my new knowledge is taking place. So I think Self-consciousness is a constant even in the comprehension of these alternatives.

Yājñavalkya: In the example you gave, the knowledge of the object matter and the knowledge of the subject matter are both eternal. The continuity of both these streams of consciousness is happening in the very knowledge of the Self in which you made comparisons of agreements and differences.

Maitreyī: In the state of deep sleep, *suṣuptī*, there is no object or subject matter to ponder. Even then, the Self continues as knowledge through and through.

Yājñavalkya: When you forget the world of objects, you also forget the Self (as ego factor). That means on such occasions, we do not know either the Self or its object of perception or conception. When we recognize ourselves, the 'I' factor becomes a correspondent to the 'thisness' of the subject matter. In the ordinary course of knowledge, Self-consciousness is like consciousness of objects. They are both transient and terminable.

Maitreyī: I am now more confused than before. From what you say, all forms of knowledge appear to me transient and unstable. It seems the Self is now described as the sheer agent of perception. It is well known that in our deep sleep, we have neither object-sense nor subjective consciousness. In that case, what happens to the existence of the Self? Again, if consciousness terminates in deep sleep, how can it revive itself in the wakeful consciousness?

Yājñavalkya: Your confusion arises from your identifying the Self with the inner organ. In one sense, the mind is inseparable from the Self. And in another sense, the mind is a separate entity. The non-stability of mind is not shared by the Self. Non-

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stability comes from the phenomenality of the mind.

Kātyāyanī: What is mind? How does it become inseparable from the Self? And how does it separate from the Self?

Yājñavalkya: Non-stability or transiency has to come from something which changes. It is well known that embodied forms of matter are susceptible to transformation. Transforming things cannot be identified with the Self. If you see everything reappearing in the wakeful Self, it is because everything continues in the Self. So we have to postulate another factor which is susceptible to transformation, and that phenomenal identity which is subject to change is the mind. In that particular context, mind is differentiated from the Self. At the same time, nothing can remain, even as an appearance, without having the Self for its foundation, and therefore mind is basically implied in the Self. In that sense, mind is the transforming phenomenality of the noumenon which is at all times identical with the Self.

Maitreyī: Aha. All my doubts are cleared. When you expounded this theory in the conference of scholars, I remember that you spoke of the indwelling immanent principle of the noumenon. At the time, you also spoke of mind as a phenomenal derivative. I still remember the very words you quoted: "He who dwells in the mind but is within it, whom the mind does not know, whose body is the mind, and who controls the mind from within, is the inner controller - your own Self and immortal" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: III.7.20). Now I clearly see how everything is established in *ātman*, and there is none other than *ātman*. When you expounded it in the conference, I could not clearly see the relationship between the Self as the noumenon and the mind as the phenomena.

Kātyāyanī: It is already very late at night. Shall we conclude our enquiry for today?

Maitreyī: My question has not yet been answered. The muni was only answering your question. Now we know that the Self is by nature conscient. We also recognize that consciousness is an eternal factor. Further we have come to know that the mind is different from the Self. My question is, "How do we know that it is the Self that is pervading in all?" Ordinarily, we each think of our personal consciousness as an separate entity as if each person has a different Self.

Yājñavalkya: When you realize the Self in its totality, you will surely see its unitiveness and indivisibility. Individual differ-

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ences do not arise out of the one unitive Self. They belong to the gestaltation of knowledge where knowledge is conditioned and where it pertains to specific formations connected with time, space and function.

Kātyāyanī: Now you are bringing in a new factor called *vijñānātmā*. I do not understand what it is. Can you explain it?

Maitreyī: I also want to know about it. In the conference, when you spoke of the Self, you differentiated it from the mind as well as specific consciousness. I understand the difference between the Self and the mind, but I do not understand the distinction you made between generality and specificity manifesting separately in the Self.

Kātyāyanī: How can you remember all the details of my husband's arguments? Perhaps you can even restate everything he said in the conference.

Maitreyī: Yes, of course. But I do not claim any glory for it. I am only remembering how the muni put the emphasis on each idea by explicating it without illustrations. I also remember the very quotation he gave in the conference: "He who dwells in the intellect but is within it, whom the intellect does not know, whose body is the intellect, and who controls the intellect from within, is the inner controller - your own Self and immortal" (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: III.7.22).

Kātyāyanī: I want to know, first of all, what is *vijñāna* (specific knowledge)? How does it occur in us? And how do we distinguish it?

Yājñavalkya: I am willing to explain everything to you clearly and minutely, but that may keep you awake the whole night. Can you remain attentive?

Maitreyī: I am ready. I can forego tonight's sleep.

Kātyāyanī: I cannot say so. Already I am fatigued and feeling very sleepy.

Maitreyī: In that case, why don't you go and sleep? I shall continue this discussion with the muni. Tomorrow I can narrate to you whatever the muni said.

Kātyāyanī: No, no, no. I want to hear every word straight from him, so let us now retire. Further, I want to say something personal to my husband before we go to sleep.

Maitreyī never wanted to be demanding, so she agreed with Kātyāyanī and retired to her room to ponder over what Muni Yājñavalkya had said.

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The Individuated Self and the Universal Self

The next evening, the muni and his wives continued their discussion. Yājñavalkya gave his introduction to that day's enquiry.

Yājñavalkya: What one individually speaks of as one's Self is also the Self which one experiences in the empirical world. If that is clearly understood, one can easily see the unity of the Self. We have a personal and private experience which is mostly confined to subjective ego-consciousness and, at the same time, we enter into interpersonal transactions and speak of collective experiences. How can we decide that what one person experiences is in exact concurrence with what others also experience? When we know things from our personal stand, on what basis do we conceive of collective consciousness and the generality of all projection? To know this, just as I told you yesterday, if we extrapolate our personal consciousness as identical with the consciousness of others, and thus, if we accept the possibility of collectively sharing consciousness, we will begin to see the indivisibility of the one knowledge that is shared by all. Such a suggestion is not given to most people, and therefore very few have looked into that possibility. Do you know for sure that your Self belongs to the universal Self? Or do you accept it only as an article of religious faith?

Maitreyī: Several times I have heard knowledgeable people speaking of *brahman*, the Absolute, as the comprehensive basis of all. When a person knows a thing, the person also recognizes his or her agency of cognition. In the same manner, when we know the world, it is only normal to think of the universal Self as the collective basis of our knowledge. At least, I think so. However, at this moment, I doubt if I have the competency to elucidate my comprehension.

Kātyāyanī: You can try your best. You can tell us what you have understood.

Yājñavalkya: Our discussion of last evening is sure to help us with this enquiry. When you see this room, do you also see anything else?

Maitreyī: When I see this room, I also include me in it as the knower of the room.

Yājñavalkya: When you know this room, apart from yourself, do you also know another Self?

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Maitreyī: No.

Yājñavalkya: Don't you think that the room is in the universal Self? At least you believe so, don't you?

Maitreyī: Yes, I believe that. But I should admit I don't understand it.

Yājñavalkya: Gradually you will come to know it. About this room, do you know anything more than the fact that it is an object of your perception?

Maitreyī: At this moment, this room is an object of my cognition, but it can also go outside my scope of cognition if I do not fix my attention on it.

Yājñavalkya: Now the room is here, and you are seeing it. On another occasion when you are oblivious of it, will the room continue to exist?

Maitreyī: Yes.

Yājñavalkya: Now this room is in your cognition. You are seeing it. It is appearing to you as tangible and objective reality. Do all these aspects continue all the time?

Maitreyī: They should. But how can I say that it continues to be so when it is outside the scope of my consciousness? If I say so, I'll be contradicting myself.

Yājñavalkya: Surely it is so. Not only you, but all people tend to contradict themselves in their knowledge of the world.

Maitreyī: In that respect, we have to maintain that the room is always a perception.

Kātyāyanī: I have another suggestion. When we do not know the room, it may be continuing to have all its present properties except that we do not have direct consciousness of it.

Maitreyī: How is that possible? The very property we attribute to the room is a projected reflection of our own comprehension. To say it is, it should be part and parcel of our objectification. The only knowledge we have is what our consciousness represents.

Yājñavalkya: In that case, you should always maintain your agency of cognition and should maintain the position that this particular cognition is held always by you. Do you want to say that you have no other knowledge of it?

Maitreyī: I do not insist that the consciousness of this room is entirely limited within the agency of my cognizing ego. It can also be of all those who are similarly cognizing it.

Yājñavalkya: However, it is now in your knowledge.

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Maitreyī: Yes, it is so.

Yājñavalkya: Every bit of its known data is within your knowledge.

Maitreyī: Yes, every bit of it is in my knowledge.

Yājñavalkya: And your consciousness is your Self.

Maitreyī: Yes.

Yājñavalkya: Shall we put it this way? This room is in your Self. Or your Self is in this room, with a one-to-one correspondence.

Maitreyī: I suppose we can say so.

Yājñavalkya: And will the room always remain as you know it?

Maitreyī: Yes, of course.

Yājñavalkya: That means even when your body is away from here, your Self is holding all the details of this room intact.

Maitreyī: It looks as if I am bound to agree, no matter how strange it is.

Yājñavalkya: It appears strange to you because you are thinking of the Self in the same way as you think of your body. You think of the idea of the Self entering and leaving as similar to the entry of the body and the exit of the body. You think of your Self as if it is a replica of your body. That means the Self you are speaking of is not the Self, but an impressionistic idealization generated in the model of the objective conditioning of perception.

Maitreyī: You have opened my eyes very much. I never thought of all these details.

Kātyāyanī: From your words, I understand that when we perceive a thing, we are also perceiving the Self that is implied in the object. That means the Self is already in everything that is susceptible to be observed or perceived.

Yājñavalkya: Yes, it is.

Kātyāyanī: For that very reason, that Self is *viśvātmā*, the universal Self, or the Self of the cosmos.

Yājñavalkya: Yes, for that reason, that is the cosmic Self.

Maitreyī: Is that the *sūtrātmā*, the contiguous Self, of which you spoke in the conference?

Yājñavalkya: Yes. That is the *sūtrātmā* (contiguous unitive Self). But I did not elucidate it to those assembled in the conference.

Maitreyī: We are very eager to know it. Will you kindly explain it to us?

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Yājñavalkya: Now you are almost ready to comprehend the subtlety implied in it. You can see how individual objects become related in your mind.

Maitreyī: This contiguous unitive Self relates me to the objects which I see. In other words, that Self inheres in me and also in the objects I know. I am surprised that I am repeating your own words which I heard you speaking in the conference hall.

Kātyāyanī: You are knowing me, but does that relate your Self with my Self? Do you see any sufficient reason for that?

Maitreyī: When you know the world, don't you identify your personal Self with the Self of the world? There is no separation between me and the world. You, being inseparable from the world, your Self and my Self should be the same.

Kātyāyanī: I understand that. But as two persons, we have many differences also. How do you account for that?

Yājñavalkya: That can be explained by knowing the specificity which accompanies knowledge. We are here more concerned with the contiguity of the *sūtrātmā*, so you may go deep into that.

Maitreyī: Let us take space which is everywhere and, at the same time, in one's mind. There is no break conceivable in space. I suppose this is accomplished by the contiguity of knowledge which is intimately experienced by one's Self. It is only when we speak of relationships that we make models of separate entities. That is the transactional limitation we force into our knowledge by allowing circumlimitation.

Yājñavalkya: When you speak of locations in space, your reference is to a relationship. All the same, the groundless space is indivisible and constant.

Maitreyī: Yes, I know. That is why I consider the cosmic and the contiguous Self one and indivisible.

Yājñavalkya: Indeed, it is so. How clearly you have comprehended what I am suggesting. I said earlier the cosmic Self is everywhere, and everything is in the cosmic Self. We can also conclude that the cosmic Self transcends all transactional conditionings of space.

Maitreyī: What we said about space, I think, can also be said of time. It is the sequence of events that make us relativistically confine ourselves to the breakup of time which, otherwise, is one and indivisible.

Yājñavalkya: That is so. So we can also say that *viśvātmā*,

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the cosmic Self, is not limited either by space or by time.

Kātyāyanī: Do you call the Self eternal because it is changeless? In that case, how does the changeless Self relate itself with the ever-continuing changes in nature?

Maitreyī: All changes are the changes of the phenomenal mind.

Kātyāyanī: I do not think that is a good enough reason. We already established that mind is fragmented. How can the cosmic changes be attributed to the changes in the mind?

Yājñavalkya: You are right, Kātyāyanī. We only established that our individual mind is fragmentary. The Self relates itself with the cosmos with the aid of the cosmic mind, or collective mind.

Kātyāyanī: When the universal Self cognizes the changes in the cosmos, does it not also undergo changes? Without identification, how can the Self perceive any object of knowledge?

Yājñavalkya: Knowledge is not a transformation. It is the *dharma* of the Self to mirror everything, including changes in the phenomena. As Maitreyī said, the universal Self is the non-transforming witness of everything. When there is an event, it has a beginning and a termination. Knowledge does not begin and does not end. It is eternally there. The cosmic Self is not a separate entity; it is the eternal ground of the cosmos. Therefore, the Self has no limitations like now or then. Also it does not refer to here or there.

Maitreyī: Shall we say that objects leave our minds for a certain duration and then reappear to inform us that they were always there?

Kātyāyanī: I do not understand why you say that knowledge is a changing phase in consciousness. When I enter this room, my mind is lit with all the special attributes of the room. That means, from a state of not knowing, I am changing into a state of knowing. Therefore, I hold the view that knowledge is definitely a change.

Maitreyī: Even before we specifically notice the peculiarities of this room, all such details are present in the collective consciousness of *viśvātma*. Knowledge is just nature and not a function.

Yājñavalkya: You cannot say "my Self knows." Self is knowledge by itself through and through. So it is to be known as non-active (*niśkriya*).

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Kātyāyanī: When we know this room or anything else, what is happening? Is not the Self coming from a state of non-perception to that of perception? Is that not an event, and consequently an action?

Yājñavalkya: Now you are speaking about specific modulations of consciousness. That is what we termed *vijñānātma*, the specifically cognizing Self. *Viśvātma*, or cosmic Self, has no consciousness and no change. It is knowledge by itself. I agree that there is a surprising element when a part of consciousness assumes the agency of cognition and sees itself as if it is a perceiver of one's Self. Then the illusion of a perceiver or an actor or an enjoyer comes into profile. When the universal Self appears as if fragmented and modulated into specific forms, we do not call it cosmic consciousness; then its status is of the specific cognizing Self. In such a case, the operational faculty is the mind that assumes the phenomenality of the inner organ.

Maitreyī: You have not left out any detail which needs clarification. It as if a transparency has come to my mind. All my doubts are cleared away. A wrong notion, sitting in the mind for ages, is hard to uproot and give up. We are so conditioned by the name and form and properties of the objects of our senses that they hold out a transactional verity which is like an iron wall before us. It is hard to push them out. Yesterday you made it clear that during any enquiry we make, whether of things or events or persons or ideas, we are also automatically coming to know in greater clarity this very Self which is both the ground and the reason of our knowledge. Today we are fully convinced that we have been so far familiarizing ourselves intimately with the Self. Thus in one sense, our Self is ever engaged in Self-enquiry. Yesterday I wrongly said that just as I can think of the room as known to me, I can also think of it as not known to me. Now only do I see how mistaken I was in holding such views.

Kātyāyanī: How clearly you see everything and epitomize the entire picture without losing any of its basic reality. I feel quite educated today. What would I do without you?

Maitreyī: (Impatient at this flattery) Please don't fight with me. This is an occasion when we should clear everything with the muni.

Kātyāyanī: I am only thanking you for giving the substance of our discussion. We see how the world is inlaid in the reality of the Self, remaining as the Self and holding the world in the Self

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we are thinking about. So it is imperative that we think of the world as having its existence in the Self. Now I cannot think of the world without conceiving of it as a fashioned or structured aspect of the stuff of the Self. What we speak of now is a verbal version of it. Now we understand why knowledgeable people say that Vedānta is only an exercise in rhetorics.

Yājñavalkya: It pleases me very much that now you see everything clearly. What else do you want to hear?

Maitreyī: I was speaking of the built in difficulty in erasing the previously established conceptual errors. I want to point out another conceptual hurdle. When we think of the Self, automatically we think of it as a tiny something which is sitting deep down in us. And when we think of the Self as transcending time and space, the concept of our Self spreads out into its infinite expansion. Thus two contradictory pictures vie with each other to claim validation. I remember that you already helped us to get over such paradoxes. You have given us the concepts of individuated consciousness and collective consciousness (*vyaṣṭi* and *samaṣṭi*). From the collective point of view, the Self is omnipresent and indivisible, and from the point of view of individuation, it refers to a delimited subject matter. I can easily shift my reference from the collective frame to the individual frame, back and forth, and get over this paradox. When I hold before me the individuated frame of reference, I can easily treat it as the specific modulation of consciousness in which my fragmented mind is operating with its phenomenal coloration. Also this gives me a clue why I again and again fall in the rut of a helpless individual standing apart from the cosmic whole. Even when intellectually I comprehend my non-separation from the Absolute, my individuation haunts me like a shadow which never leaves a three-dimensional model.

Yājñavalkya: I think you should know about two more hurdles. When you focus your attention on any object of interest, it becomes circumlimited with the very frame of reference into which you interject your special interest. When you expand your frame of reference, the horizon of your observation and comprehension also becomes automatically enlarged. Perceiving this process of the expansion of knowledge, you can again and again clearly comprehend the cosmic Self and re-establish your liaison with it. Another aspect you should consider is the recurring deep sleep (*suṣupti*). Until sleep comes, we think we are in an expan-

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sive world. Nothing stops us. From looking into the distance, it is as if suddenly the horizon of our consciousness caves in from all sides and the very spark of individuated consciousness is blown out. Curiously, that does not sublate the Self. Instead, it is restored to its totality, an indivisible unity in which no fragmentation can be traced. It is as if we have gone into an effortless *real-ization*.

Maitreyī: This instruction is very valuable. This will help us very much.

Kātyāyanī: I think we've heard enough for the day. Shall we stop our study here?

Maitreyī: Yes, of course. We've got not only enough for one day, but for our whole lifetime. I leave you to be with your husband. I do not think sleep will ever come to me. However, I will return to the *muni* to hear from him more about the final release.

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ADHYĀYA II

Brāhmaṇa 1

Mantra 1

AUM. dṛptabālākirhānūcāno gārgya āsa. sa hovācajātaśatrum kāśyam brahma te bravāṇīti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, sahasrametasyām vāci dadmaḥ. janako janaka iti vai janā dhāvantīti.

Word Meanings

AUM - *AUM; dṛptabālākiḥ* - (named) proud Bālāki (son of Balāka); *anūcānaḥ* - eloquent; *gārgayaḥ* - a descendant of Garga; *āsa* - there was; *ha* - so goes the story; *saḥ ha* - he; *ajātaśatrum* - to Ajātaśatru; *kāśyam* - king of Kāśi (Benares); *uvāca* - said; *te* - to you; *brahma* - about *brahman; bravāṇi* - let me tell; *iti saḥ ha* - that; *ajātaśatruḥ* - Ajātaśatru; *uwāca* - said; *etasyām* - for this; *vāci* - proposal; *sahasram* - a thousand (cows); *dadmaḥ* - I offer (you); *janāḥ* - people; *janakaḥ janakaḥ iti* - saying Janaka, Janaka; *dhāvanti* - run; *vai* - verily; *iti*

AUM. There was once an eloquent descendant of Garga named Proud Bālāki. He said to Ajātaśatru, King of Benares: "Let me tell you about *brahman*." At this Ajātaśatru said: "For this proposal I offer you a thousand cows. People verily run (to Janaka), saying, 'Janaka (is benevolent), Janaka (is a listener)'. (I too am like him)."

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To place this first mantra of the second *adhyāya* in its proper perspective we shall have a recapitulation of all the subjects covered by the first *adhyāya*. At its close, it was revealed to us that the whole of the first *adhyāya* was dealing with the non-Self. In the second chapter it is appropriate to focus our attention on the Self. The non-Self has three characteristics. The first is that it refers to the changing phenomena in which appearances matter and reality is almost always obscure. For this reason, we were given a prayer to be liberated from the untruth of the non-Self and given a placement in the real - *asato mā sat gamaya*.

The second characteristic of the non-Self is that the shadow is taken for the real. We are in the dark so far as the Self is concerned. Every aspect of the phenomenal world, which is multitudinous, is named. The name suggests a fabricated mental image. The world of the non-Self is woven out of that fabrication. Hence, whatever seems absolutely clear to us has, at best, only the vividness of a dream. Day after day we look at the shadows and program our lives. If we realize this we should pray, "Let me be restored from darkness and brought to the true light of the Self" - *tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*.

The third characteristic of the non-Self is to project an inner vision only to kill it in order to bring out of it a more complex entity. Interminable birth and death make the phenomenal series of the non-Self. On realizing this one can pray, "Let me be saved from the dark dungeon of death so that I may share the eternity of my true Self" - *mṛtyormā amṛtam gamaya*.

Only after the presentation of the discrimination of what is untrue, dark and mortal, is it methodologically correct to present what is true, self-luminous and immortal. The Self is indivisible, unitive and without parts. The non-Self is placed in the time-space continuum. It has both an extension and a purposive intention which decides how many parts it should have and how each part should be designed to be teleologically conjoined. The non-Self is a structure which has gradations of ontologic essence which manifest according to the purpose for which every part is conceived.

The *Upaniṣad* begins with a vision of co-relationship. The first phase is relating the causal with the subtle and the subtle with the gross. These triple aspects implied in the order of creation can be seen in a sacrificial horse. Hence, the image of a horse is presented at the beginning of the *Upaniṣad*. Its head is

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related to the morning glory of the rising sun which is in outer space. Its solar rays are the energizing causal factor which brings life not only to a horse but also to all self-activating organisms. The causal principle projects itself into something as subtle as the protoplasm. Thereafter it can crystalize into the morbidity of an animal's bones. The horse is presented with the express need of relating the heavens to the atmosphere and the atmosphere to the terrestrial biosphere. The eyes of the horse are in perfect attunement with the morning sun. Its hard hooves are planted firm on the terra firma. The back of the horse separates the atmosphere from the heavens. The belly of the horse is equated with the atmosphere. The clouds are seen as the flesh of the horse and the stars as its bones. Relating each part of a structured being in such an ingenious manner to present the totality of the picture is valid in modern science. That is the logistics of relationship.

The horse is so placed that its front represents the day and its behind, the night. The presentation of the horse is made epistemologically valid by giving a correct account of time and the movement by which the rear follows the front. One of the magical alternations in the phenomenal world is the switching of the consciousness back and forth between a state of wakefulness and a state of dreamy sleep. That is shown by reference to a golden vessel placed in front of the sacrificial horse and a silver vessel placed behind it which respectively represent the source of the beginning and the finality which everything closes into.

The second *brāhmaṇa* of the first chapter presents the alchemy of creation. In alchemy there is always combustion and the generation of fire. In Greek mythology, Prometheus brought fire from the heavens. In the second *brāhmaṇa* fire came as a bi-product of a frightened mind hard-pressed for an immediate way to save itself from the danger of being gobbled by hunger. In a single egg, dichotomy arose between the fire of hunger *(vaiśvānara agni)* and its counterpart, the proposal or the thesis of an intended fuel for the hungry mouth of death. There arose the lord of projection, *prajāpati (prajanam* is projection). The first model of an organism was subjected to the difficulty of finding a solution to the danger of death. In the process, sweat came out of it. In the sweat, there was water and fire. When the fire left, it became condensed into a solid state. Thus there was solidity, viscosity and thermodynamics. The essentials of life were spon-

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taneously generated.

After presenting these essentials of life, the *Upaniṣad* goes into the transformation of the idea of further projection. There is a lull. For each manifestation a period of time is required such as that needed for a sperm and ovum to grow into a fetus and then to become ready to commence life as an independent entity. Time became marked with intermittent beginnings and ends. Periods of time arose, especially the year. In its embryonic state, a fetus is equipped with instrumentation. First comes the articulating device which is meant to be heard. A connection is made between the hearing organism and the organ of articulation. Consequently, at the end of the year of conception, the phenomena becomes a self-expressive entity which has words to utter. When something is named, it becomes distinct. The speaker places an encomium on whatever he or she names. That is the beginning of the *ṛg*. When a thing is revered, praised and endeared, the love expression is followed by offerings and dedications. Thus the *ṛg* is followed by the ritualistic *yajus*. When the joyous reveller glorifies whatever is dear to him, he bursts into music with the exultations of *sāma*.

The *vedas* belong to the world of the triple qualities, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Darkness always indicates death. A sacrificial horse was chosen because it will inevitably be forfeited. This is the story of every living organism which commences with the swelling of the first cell until it cannot swell any more. Then it has to sacrifice itself by dividing into two cells. Then the proliferation of cells through replication becomes the order of life. The horse sacrifice is the best model we can think of to study the multifarious phases of organisms projected onto the non-Self.

In the third *brāhmaṇa*, everything is paired with its opposite: life with death, food with hunger, good with evil. Good is bright and evil is dark. Hence, the good is called the shining one *(deva)* and the dark is called the demonic *(asura)*. They were born of the same life situation so they both inhabit the same body of the *prajāpati*. They have a certain intimacy because the eye can see good and evil and the ear can hear good and evil. Each sense is the perennial abode of both the *deva* and the *asura*. In the third *brāhmaṇa* the idea comes of transforming the mortal into the immortal with the aid of invocations called *udgītha*. In the exercise of *udgītha* the eyes, the ears and the mind were all defeated by the demons.

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Ultimately, the life-generating vital breath saved the *prajāpati* by taking the gods of vision, the gods of hearing and the gods of articulation beyond the reach of death. Death was no longer imminent. There was a lot of living space. This great benefactor, the vital breath, was ultimately discovered as stationed in one's own mouth. So it was called *ayāsya*, "here it is." Soon it was found that the same vital breath has all the nourishing essences for the living organism. Hence it was called *āṅgiras (āṅga* - limb; *rasa* - essence). This vital breath then gave discipline to the spoken word. It was taught how to make life-giving food, how to discover the essence of life within oneself, how to make one's articulation agreeable through the rhythmic and musical tone in which it can be recited. Thus the poetic meters came into being. The lord of life also became the lord of words and the lord of exaltation of greater and nobler truths. Discipline arose in the reciting of noble invocations. A prayer was received by which one can promote oneself from falsehood to truth, darkness to light, and death to immortality.

In the fourth *brāhmaṇa*, the *prajāpati* saw to what infinite extension it had grown; whatever it could lay eyes on was all found to be itself. Thus it said "*aham*, I am." As it was infinite it said, "*aham brahma asmi*, I am all that Absolute." Finding itself to be alone, it became terrified. Then the wisdom came that when there is no second, there is nothing to be afraid of. Realizing that there was no second brought the *prajāpati* to grief. If there is no second, there is no one to love, and love is essential to life itself. It swelled and became as big as a man and a woman in an embrace. That being split into man and woman. As the *prajāpati* became a person with a mind to think, ruminate, plan and make devices, it became the mindful, *manu*.

The woman that issued out of the *prajāpati* was to be the mother of all. Creatures are distinct from each other. So she became the artificer of creation, *śatarūpa*, one who has a hundred forms. She changed first into a cow, then into a mare. With each one, *manu* copulated. Finally she became an ant. Even with that *manu* copulated. The variegated forms of life on earth thus came from the same donor of the sperm and were all nurtured in the same womb. The fourth *brāhmaṇa* thus reveals an organic unity in the birth, death and growth of beings. The dual principle of the uniting cause and the separating distinctiveness of manifold life forms demonstrates the general nature of the Ab-

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solute as a manifested whole and the Absolute as a transcendent principle.

When society evolved, it needed law. Law is to be enunciated and enforced. That made a king necessary. Thus the *kṣatriya* came. He has the power to enact law and to enforce it. Where there is power there will be corruption. There was a need for compassion, the administration of law with love and sympathy. A universal outlook was necessary. Thus the benevolent *brāhmaṇa* came. Even a mighty ruler and a compassionate benefactor cannot meet all the needs of people. For that there has to be a facilitator. That necessitated the *vaiśya*. He cannot afford to be angry with anyone because he has to profit from others' love for him. Thus he is like a harmonizer. The world was still not perfect - there was no one to give food, clothing and shelter. Then came the universal saviour of all, the *śūdra*, who took upon himself the great responsibility of feeding and caring for all. Unfortunately his commitment tied him down to his station of life. He had to slave all day and night to be true to his parent-like love for all whom he cared for. Equity was needed in the social engineering. That came from *dharma*.

In spite of having phenomenal life enriched and the social order made harmonious, the true purpose of life - to know oneself was not obtained. In the fifth *brāhmaṇa*, a thought was given of the greater nourishment which comes from the universal father. The seven kinds of food produced by the benefactor of life were studied. Just as all living beings have the same breath and materials for building blocks, the same nourishment was given to all. However, there were gods who were also to be nourished. They were given the nourishment of the sun, moon and *prāṇa*. Between day and night, the sun and the moon are lived; the *prāṇa* is lived in the unconscious of the *suṣupti*. The regulator of the universe - the waxing and waning moon - was commissioned to be the monitor of life. In the course of a month a new moon and a full moon come. Fifteen days after the full moon, the moon is not seen because that is the beginning of the new cycle. Human life also floats with the fate of the waxing and waning moon. We are alternately elated and depressed, rich and poor. To get over the vicissitudes of life, we are given the discipline of sticking to an ideal, a life of dedication.

In the sixth *brāhmaṇa*, the true nature of the Self was revealed. In our world of ignorance life is lived on the strength of

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words *(nāma)*, forms of apprehension *(rūpa)* and functional programs which fill our days *(kriya)*.

Mantra 2

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ. ya evāsāvāditye puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā mattasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, atiṣṭhāḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām mūrdhā rājeti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste'tiṣṭhāḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām mūrdhā rājā bhavati.

Word Meanings

saḥ ha - that; *gārgyaḥ* - Gārgya, descendant of Garga; *uvāca* - said; *āditye* - in the sun; *yaḥ* - who (is); *eva* - indeed; *asau* - that; *puruṣaḥ* - being; *etam* - him; *eva* - only; *aham* - I; *brahma* - *brahman; upāse* - meditate on, adore; *iti; saḥ ha* that; *ajātaśatruḥ* - Ajātaśatru; *uvāca* - said; *etasmin* - about him; *mā mā* - do not; *samvadiṣṭhāḥ* - talk; *etam* - him; *vai* - verily; *aham* - I; *atiṣṭhāḥ* - transcendent; *sarveṣām bhutānām* - of all beings; *mūrdhā* - the head; *rājā* - radiant; *iti* - as; *upāse* - adore; *iti; saḥ* - one; *yaḥ* - who; *etam* - him; *evam* - thus; *upāsate* - adores; *atiṣṭhāḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām mūrdhā rājā* - (As before.); *bhavati* - becomes

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the sun." Ajātaśatru replied: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as transcendent, as the head of all beings and as radiant. One who adores him thus becomes transcendent, the head of all beings and radiant."

In this mantra Gārgya is encouraged to teach the king his version of the Absolute. Gārgya says, "I adore as *brahman* that being who is in the sun." On hearing this, Ajātaśatru replies, "Please do not talk of the sun as the Absolute. What I adore in the sun is the principle of the transcendent which the sun repre-

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sents. It is with its immanence that the sun seems to be illuminating everything in the world and gains supremacy with its radiance. If one can discriminate the transcendent aspect of the radiance which manifests as the immanence of the visible world, that will help one to see a similar scheme of transcendence and immanence in all the details of the non-Self."

Later in the *Upaniṣad* Yājñavalkya describes the discipline of meditation for the benefit of his disciple Maitreyī as follows. First, you should listen to the word of truth with full attention. After having heard, you should ponder over it, putting all your soul, mind and strength into it. That will enable you to go from the superficial levels of hearing to the deepest core of understanding which reveals truth to the contemplative.

The dialogue between Gārgya and King Ajātaśatru has two parts. What Gārgya states is called the anterior opinion and what the king states is the posterior conclusion. Anterior opinion is called *pūrva pakṣa* and posterior conclusion is called *siddhānta*. The traditional method in the Upaniṣadic world is that of bringing home the higher truth of the Self through a dialogue between guru and disciple. Although in the present mantra Gārgya assumes the position of guru and Ajātaśatru that of a willing disciple, because of Gārgya's incompetence, there is a reversal in the spirit of the dialogue. What Gārgya says only has the status of an anterior opinion. The king gives the correction of his greater conviction.

Gārgya speaks of the supremacy of the sun because the sun sheds its rays on every article of vision. We see not only the light but light contrasted with darkness. If there were only light or only darkness we wouldn't see anything. It is only because a shadow sits adjacent to a patch of light that an object is formed. It becomes restructured, not existentially but substantially, with the projection of a form. This damages us in two ways. The first damage done is that we forget the natural state of the Self which takes upon it the state of the object seen. The ego of the Self becomes circumlimited to that of a viewer of an object. This brings an inevitable forgetfulness of the Self. The Self can be the all-seeing eye but again and again it is assigned a point of vision and given a span which delimits it. The objectification of limited consciousness gives it a recognition of the gross and the concrete. The magical hypnosis to which the viewer-ego is now confined gives the experiences the status of empirical reality. All the met-

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rics of measurement which modern physics has devised can be applied and the validity of science makes the experience rationally indisputable. This is the first deceit that comes to us.

The second is that, out of the infinity of space and time, our sensory faculties focus on a fragment without showing its relationship with the whole. Thus the Self, which otherwise should be in relationship with the entirety of the cosmos, is made to occupy a small area, busying itself with the pettiness of a small affair. The fragmentation of consciousness is so devastating that it is difficult to return to a unitive vision of the whole. Ajātaśatru says we should transcend this limitation. Just like the sun holds the entire world in the sway of its radiation, one's Self, the reciprocal counterpart of the illuminating sun, has a totality of its own. If one transfers one's identity from the small variegated patches of physical vision to the unitiveness of total comprehension, one can release one's Self from its assumed ego agency into its timeless and spaceless universality. When one regains the proper realm of the Self, it is as if the Self is made the monarch of its imperiential world. This is called gaining *svarāj*, recapturing the domain of the Self. The Self becomes *samrāj*, the emperor of that realm.

If an object is seen illuminated by a light from above and then seen in the next moment with light from below, it will look different because the first vision is sublated by the second vision. Similarly, if the world seen through the physical agency is restructured through knowledge of the spirit, it will sublate the earlier conclusion. Knowing there is such deception in the world of empirical configurations, one should work upon oneself every day to be in absolute communion with the reality of one's Self. The king does not minimize the importance of the sun but shows what a relative factor it is in comparison with the Absolute and how, in the world of relativistic empirical reality, one can go into an absolutist merger with total reality. Such is the wonder of this mantra when we take a hint from how King Ajātaśatru reinterprets the actual position of the sun. This is a model of seeing truth in accordance with the prescribed methodology presented by the *Upaniṣad*. Let us go again and again into that discipline and attain our peace and be in full resonance with the truth.

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Mantra 3

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāsau candre puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, bṛhanpāṇḍaravāsāḥ somo rājeti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste'haraharha sutaḥ prasuto bhavati, nāsyānnam kṣīyate

Word Meanings

candre - in the moon; *etam eva aham bṛhan* - the great; *pāṇḍarvāsāḥ* - white-robed; *somaḥ* - moon (and the soma creeper); *rājā* - radiant; *iti* - as; *upāse iti; saḥ yaḥ etam evam upāste ahaḥ ahaḥ* - every day (in his sacrifices the soma juice); *sutaḥ* - pressed; *prasutaḥ* - pressed profusely; *bhavati ha* - is; *asya* - his; *annam* - food; *na* - not; *kṣīyate* - is exhausted; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the moon". At this Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as the great, white-robed, radiant *soma*. He who adores him thus gets *soma* pressed out and that profusely (in his sacrifices) every day, and his food is never exhausted."

Day and night were already mentioned in the earlier chapter as two kinds of nourishment which the father of the world gave to the gods. The day is presided over by the sun. The sun gives perception to our eyes which keeps us fully awake in the world of subject-object duality. The experience we get in the wakeful state is direct perception. That constitutes our ontologic and empirical world. Empirical facts have a measurability and a continuity. Because of that, the claims of empirical facts upon us are irrefutable. We think that whatever happens to us in our wakeful lives belongs to the real because we can act upon everything revealed by the sun. The great tragedy is that the brightness of the object obscures the reality of the subject.

In contrast to the day and its sunlit objects, we have a fluctu-

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ating life of lunar influence on our hearts. The heart is the counterpart of the reasoning mind which is considered to be in the head. The heart belongs to a deeper aspect of the human psyche because it is in resonance with our deepest cravings for the pleasures of life. The heart is the place of *anāhata*, the unbroken reverberation of the passion of life. The dream of the future and the restoration of the dreams of the past make the passions of the heart doubly felt. Just as the moon brings high and low tides in the oceans, we are deeply affected by the passions in our hearts, metaphorically presented here as the *soma*, the sacred wine that is pressed out of the *soma* plant. The will to enjoy and the will to overpower are like two stones between which human creativity is hard pressed to generate the very wine of life that is endowed with many qualities of enjoyment.

There was a great combat between the gods and the demons to obtain *soma*, the elixir of immortality. Once the demons won it and stored it in a secret place. But the eagle of determination was able to steal it. There are many such mythical allusions to *soma* in Indian myths and legends. When Gārgya refers to the moon, his vision is only superficial. He first thinks of the sun and then of the moon.

Ajātaśatru has a greater insight into the relationship between day and night, the empirical and the subjective. He understands how the will and power to generate are in control of the passions of the heart. To him, the being of the moon is not the Absolute. However, he knows that human beings listen more to the persuasion of the heart than to the reason of the intelligence. He sees the merits of the passions of the heart, equated with *soma*, and also sees how, left to themselves, they can be dangerous. So he is willing to propitiate *soma* on many counts without ever seeing it as the Absolute. Relativism, in its definitiveness, can share some of the qualities of the Absolute such as the power of *māyā*. In the *Ṛg Veda* we find some interesting passages which describe the relative merits of *soma*. Many of the references have great poetic beauty, such as those cited below.

> This restless *Soma* - you try to grab him but he breaks away and overpowers everything. He is a sage and a seer inspired by poetry.
>
> He covers the naked and heals all who are sick. The blind man sees; the lame man steps forth.

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Through your knowledge and skills, rushing forward you drive out of the sky and the earth the evil deed of the enemy.

Let those who seek find what they seek: let them receive the treasure given by the generous and stop the greedy from getting what they want.

Be kind and merciful to us, Soma; be good to our heart, without confusing our powers in your whirlwind.

(VIII.79.1,2,4,5,7)

The honey of Soma is a great feast; the wide pasture of Aditi is for the man who follows the right way. Child of dawn, the bull who rules over the rain here, leader of the waters, worthy of hymns, he is the one who brings help here.

Relentlessly they flow down into the filter of a thousand streams; let them have offspring in the third realm of the world. Four hidden springs pouring forth butter carry down from the sky the ambrosia that is the oblation.

(IX.74.3,6)

Let them raise their voices, and let us raise our voices. Speak your speech to the stones that speak, when you stones, you mountains full of Soma, rush to bring the rhythmic sound to Indra.

They speak in a hundred ways, a thousand ways, howling with their green jaws. Working busily and well to do the good work, the stones have succeeded in eating the oblation even before the priest of the oblation. They speak: they have found the honey. They growl and gnaw on the cooked meat. As they snap at the branch of the red tree, the bulls who have grazed well begin to bellow.

(X.94.1,2,3)

These streams of butter flow from the ocean of the heart, enclosed by a hundred fences so that the enemy cannot see them. I gaze upon them; the golden reed is in their midst.

Our words flow together like rivers, made clear by

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understanding deep within the heart. These waves of butter flow like gazelles fleeing before a hunter.

Like whirlpools in the current of a river, the young streams of butter surge forth and swell with the waves, overtaking the wind like a chestnut racehorse that breaks through the sides of the track.

Smiling, the streams of butter rush to Agni like beautiful women to a festival. They touch the fuel-sticks, and Agni joyously woos them.

(IV.58.5,6,7,8)

Fluttering as he brought it down, the bird swift as thought shot forth on the wide path; swiftly the eagle came with the honey of Soma and won fame for that.

Stretching out in flight, holding the stem, the eagle brought the exhilarating and intoxicating drink from the distance. Accompanied by the gods, the bird clutched the Soma tightly after he took it from that highest heaven.

(IV.26.5,6)

Like impetuous winds, the drinks have lifted me up. Have I not drunk Soma?

The drinks have filled me up, like swift horses bolting with a chariot. Have I not drunk Soma?

I turn the prayer around in my heart, as a wheelwright turns a chariot seat. Have I not drunk Soma?

The two world halves cannot be set against a single wing of mine. Have I not drunk Soma?

In my vastness, I surpassed the sky and this vast earth. Have I not drunk Soma?

(X.119.2,3,5,7,8)

Where the inextinguishable light shines, the world where the sun was placed, in that immortal, unfading world, O Purifier, place me. O drop of Soma, flow for Indra.

Where Vivasvān's son is king, where heaven is enclosed, where those young waters are - there make me immortal. O drop of Soma, flow for Indra.

(IX.113.7,8)

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I have tasted the sweet drink of life, knowing that it inspires good thoughts and joyous expansiveness to the extreme, that all the gods and mortals seek it together, calling it honey.

When you penetrate inside, you will know no limits, and you will avert the wrath of the gods. Enjoying Indra's friendship, O drop of Soma, bring riches as a docile cow brings the yoke.

We have drunk the Soma; we have become immortal; we have gone to the light; we have found the gods. What can hatred and the malice of a mortal do to us now, O immortal one?

When we have drunk you, O drop of Soma, be good to our heart, kind as a father to his son, thoughtful as a friend to a friend. Far-famed Soma, stretch out our life-span so that we may live.

The glorious drops that I have drunk set me free in wide space. You have bound me together in my limbs as thongs bind a chariot. Let the drops protect me from the foot that stumbles and keep lameness away from me. Inflame me like a fire kindled by friction; make us see far; make us richer, better. For when I am intoxicated with you, Soma, I think myself rich. Draw near and make us thrive.

(VIII.48.1,2,3,4,5,6) 8

We can see that the great lyrics of the *Ṛg Veda* are remembered and retained in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The attempt of the *Upaniṣad*, in its revaluation of Vedism, is to preserve whatever is valuable in the Vedic lore while filtering out everything found to be malignant. Everything that enhances human dignity has certainly been preserved.

When we read Ajātaśatru's correction of Gārgya's estimation of the moon, we should keep in mind that the sun does not depend on the moon, while the moon is interwoven with the sun. The thirty days of a lunar month are a beautiful handicraft of the visible and the adorable which are all strung on the mystical string of the Self. When colorful beads are strung, they glitter and attract our attention, while the golden string that gives unity to all is held away from our gaze. The string is the independent Absolute and the beads are the dependent creations of time and

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space and their interactions with the passions of creatures.

Mantra 4

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāsau vidyuti puruṣa etam evāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, tejasvīti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste tejasvī ha bhavati, tejasvinī hāsya prajā bhavati.

Word Meanings

vidyuti - in lightning; *tejasvī* - brilliant, powerful; *asya* - his; *prajā* - progeny; *tejasvinī* - powerful; *ha* - indeed; *bhavati* - becomes; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in lightning." Ajātaśatru said, "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as brilliant. He who adores him thus becomes brilliant indeed, and his progeny too becomes brilliant."

On a dark night, when lightning occurs in a rain cloud, it has a brilliance and an abruptness that deeply affects whoever witnesses it. In Sanskrit this is called *vidyuti. Vaidyutī* is the Sanskrit term for electricity. Lightning is a sudden high voltage discharge of electricity in the form of a luminous, multi-branched spark, up to several miles long, in between clouds or from a cloud to the ground. The current flowing in the flash or stroke is of the order of tens of thousands of amperes. "Sheet" or "heat" lightning is simply the reflection of a distant storm by clouds. The area of meteorology concerned with the formation, motion and abstraction of free electrical charges and their role in weather formation is usually divided into two areas depending on the order and severity of their electrical effects - fair weather conditions and thunder storm weather conditions. Under fair weather conditions, the upper atmosphere, particularly the ionosphere,

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carries a positive charge of about 300,000 volts with respect to the earth's surface. Except in the vicinity of thunder storms, where local effects predominate, the potential difference between earth and the atmosphere creates a vertically directed electric field which acts to drive positive charges downward.

In ancient days, when people watched this abrupt phenomena of lightning, they naturally thought that some supreme power was trying to send its message to humans on earth. In the Old Testament, we read of several occasions of the almighty God Jehovah calling people's attention with lightning and then revealing his warning or proclamations to humanity. In this mantra, Gārgya is simply impressed by the magical appearance of lightning. He presumes that it is produced by a spirit and he eulogizes that spirit, thinking of it as the Absolute.

On hearing this, Ajātaśatru objects to the primacy of lightning. He only reckons with its brilliance as something akin to the power of *ātman* to animate. Animation in living bodies is as interesting as atmospheric electricity and thunder storms. In the Vedic ages, natural forces were all looked upon as psycho-cosmological beings. They were worshiped as deities such as the god of perception, *Indra*, the god of rain and oceans, *Varuṇa*, and the gods of storms, the *Māruts*. The rishis were unsure of their own speculations about these phenomenal forces. Poetically they sang of the mystery of the Maruts.

> Who knows the origin of the storms? When they come in chariots yoked to female fawns, who recognizes their strength? When in the sky the wheels of the chariot make a terrible sound, does anyone know that these benevolent friends are bringing rain clouds to shower mercy on the beings below?
>
> When will they come on electrically charged horses to enjoy the wine of happiness? Do we understand them as friendly visitors from above?
>
> Seeing my confusion and wonder, they addressed me and said, "O seer, see us face to face and give us your worship."
>
> Their chariots are brilliant and their swords have sharp blades on either side. They are born of water; their path is the path of storm. When you praise them, may the Goddess of Wisdom, *Saraśvatī*, listen to your

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recitation. We pray to them that we be enriched with worthy children.

(III.3.26)

In the *Ṛg Veda* V.3.23, we read that where there is the brilliance of lightning, there also are the friendly gods, *Mitra* (an intimate friend) and *Varuṇa* (he who gives benevolent blessings). There is a beautiful lyrical reference to the pleasing sight of lightning and the lightning is also described as the head gear of the strong and brilliant gods, the *Maruts*, in *Ṛg Veda* V.8.23.

Ajātaśatru knows all this. He also knows the contemplative methodology of treating all examples as illustrative of a mystical truth. Lightning is a phenomena which belongs to the cosmologic heavens, to psychologic apprehension through consciousness and sensation and to the micro-biologic animation of life in its most primary forms. All activities in a living organism come from an electrical discharge like lightning originating from chemical functioning. Chemical stimulation comes from physical channeling of energy. The Absolute or the Self being the cause of all causes, it has in it the purposiveness to direct animating energy to serve as the *krtya* or function in the field of the non-Self. The Self is the origin. Physical potential, chemical manifestation and electrical activity are only subsequent modifications which come as phenomena.

Just as Ajātaśatru showed in the previous mantra that a wise person can penetrate the complex occurrence of cause and effect relationships, what is to be appreciated here is the nature of the Self as the self-luminous. Narayana Guru, in his *Vedānta Sūtras*, defines the Self as *tat jyotaḥ* - that shines. Ajātaśatru, being a knower of the Self, gives credence to brilliance as indicative of the presence of the Self and, as such, he adores it. In the physiological functioning of the nervous system, when electrical energy originates from chemical sources and rushes through the affectors of the afferent nerve cells, it is again and again stopped by synapses where two nerve cells are conjoined. The brilliance and the abruptness of the electrical charge needs to be dynamic to break through a synapse and relay the charge to the next nerve cell. When this is done repeatedly, the electrical conduction of the message becomes fast and precise. A person who knows this should not dampen his physical and physiological system with that which can block the conveyance of animating

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electrical currents.

A high sensibility needs to be cultivated. *Śraddha* or concentrated faith is a self-help by which one becomes fully aware of both the sensitivity of the senses and the associated conditionings which trigger immediate memory recall. These are some of the subtle indications of Ajātaśatru's statement that by giving one's spiritual attention to the brilliance of the lightning one also becomes brilliant. There is also the genetic possibility of offspring retaining the parent's high degree of sensibility which is instrumental for the progression of human culture.

Only with a deep *manana* can we unravel the depth of a mantra which is given in the *Upaniṣads*. Contemplative people, well-disciplined with erudition and penetration, have traditionally been resorting to the Vedic revelations on one side and, on the other, to the grammatical canons with which the terminologies are coined. The methodology of interpretation has been given through ages. Gārgya has only "hear-say" information about phenomena such as *sūrya, candra, soma,* and *vidyuti,* etc. Ajātaśatru, on the other hand, has his own mystical experience as a basis for forming a correct perspective on such references, All this shows that an *Upaniṣad,* like a cow, yields its milk of wisdom only when it is milked by deep pondering over it *(manana).* Only the conviction that comes from *manana* can give us a holistic intimacy to relate with the essential teaching.

Mantra 5

sa hovāca gārgayaḥ, ya evāyamākāśe puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, pūrṇamapravartīti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etametamupāste pūryate prajayā paśubhiḥ, nāsyāsmāllokātprajodvartate.

Word Meanings

ākāśo - in space, in the ether; *pūrṇam* - full; *apravṛtti* - immobile; *prajayā* - with progeny; *paśubhiḥ* - with cattle; *pūryate* - is filled; *asya* - his; *prajā* - progeny; *asmāt lokāt* - from this world; *na* - never; *udvartate* - dies out; (Rest

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as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the ether." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him; I adore him alone as full and immobile. He who adores him thus becomes filled with progeny and cattle, and his progeny never dies out from this world."

Gārgya here refers to the space or the sky as the Absolute with some justification. It is the all-filling which lends occupancy to all beings that have duration and extension. The pure state of absolute consciousness is often compared to the immobile sky. But even so Ajātaśatru is not fully satisfied that Gārgya is speaking of the sky as the Absolute with the understanding of a self-realized seer. There are certain subtle aspects of the sky which are to be taken into consideration to arrive at Ajātaśatru's spiritual vision of *ākāśa* or *dyau*. The sky does not hinder any thing. If something has to manifest in time and space sky unhesitatingly lends whatever space a thing requires to be. One nature of the sky that easily meets with our appreciation is its spontaneous generosity. Just as a husband and wife are together looked upon as a single reality, heaven and earth are counterparts of field which contains a lot of reciprocity and interaction.

A wise man is often compared to a being that is steadfast as well as freely moving. This is quite often so in the inner experience of a poet. The poet is pinned down to an adorable value to which her heart is glued. At the same time, that releases her from all the bondages of earth so she can soar into the heavens on her wings of imagination. Thus *dyau* or *ākāśa* is repeatedly adored in the *Vedas* as the generator of poetry. Sky is often compared to a bull from whose seed come countless milch cows who give the milk of poetry. In the present case the seed is the inspiration that arises from the pure bliss or *ānanda* of the Self.

The sky above, which is empty, and the solid earth, which has many geological strata of soil, veins of water, oil and gas, and various ores of metals, are held together in proximity. Yet the conjuring sky draws out of earth many valuable manifestations. From out of nothing, a sapling comes and, finally, one can see a whole rain forest with mighty trees brushing the sky, filled with forms of life, both flora and fauna, and countless species of bugs

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and beetles in which the entomologists rejoice. It is all like visible poetry which the sky is spewing onto the broad bosom of his beloved earth. The supreme Self requires only a minute fraction of its animating sheen to create the magic show of a world of varieties. Its desert lands, mountain ridges, running brooks and mighty rivers, expanses of water ranging from the oceans and lakes to small little puddles, and dainty drops of rain water or of dew are only a few of the endless variations of the sky's magical creation on earth. In spite of cyclic changes and seasonal variations, the grand scheme of becoming within the four walls of being is always the same. There are two beautiful passages in the *Ṛg Veda* which we quote here.

> Sky and earth, these two who are good for everyone, hold the Order and bear the poet of space. Between the two goddesses, the two bowls that give birth magnificently, the pure sun god moves according to the laws of nature.
>
> Wide and roomy, strong and inexhaustible, the father and mother protect the universe. The two world-halves are as bold as two wonderful girls when their father dresses them in shapes and colors.
>
> The son of these parents, their clever charioteer with the power to make things clear, purifies the universe by magic. From the dappled milk-cow and the bull with good seed, every day he milks the milk that is his seed.
>
> Most artful of the artful gods, he gave birth to the two world-halves that are good for everyone. He measured apart the two realms of space with his power of inspiration and fixed them in place with undecaying pillars.
>
> Sky and earth, you mighty pair whose praises we have sung, grant us great fame and high sovereignty, by which we may extend our rule over the peoples for ever. Give us enormous force.
>
> (I.160.1-5)

> Which of these two was first, and which came later? How were they born? Who, O poets, really knows? They themselves bear whatever has a name. The two halves of the day roll past one another like two wheels.

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These two who do not move, who have no feet, receive the teeming embryo that moves and has feet, like a natural son in the parents' lap. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

I call upon Aditi's gift that dispels evil and repels assault, the celestial, awe-inspiring gift that saves us from violent death. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

We wish to please the two world-halves whose sons are the gods, the two among the gods who free us from suffering and help the helpless, with the two rotating halves of the days. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

The two young women, true sisters who join in the lap of their parents, share a common boundary and kiss the navel of the world. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

With truth I call upon the two wide and high mansions who give birth with the help of the gods, the two whose faces are lovely and who have received immortality. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

With reverence in this sacrifice I speak in prayer to the two who are wide, vast, and massive, whose boundaries are far distant, who having received immortality bring good fortune and dispel evil. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

Whatever wrong we have ever done to the gods, or to an old friend, or to the master of the house, for all of these let the thought in this hymn be an apology. Sky and earth, guard us from the monstrous abyss.

Let both sides of the praise of heroes be kind to me. Let both of them stay near me with help and favour. There is plenty for the patron who is more generous than a stranger. Let us become ecstatic, O gods, and invigorated by the drink of ecstasy.

I have in my wisdom spoken this truth to heaven and earth, so that they will hear it first. Let them protect us from the blame and evil that we face. Let father and mother guard us with helping favours.

Let this come true, what I have said here in prayer to you, sky and earth, father and mother. Become the clos-

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est of the gods with your helping favours. Let us find the drink whose luscious drops give strength and ecstasy.

(I.185. 1-11) 9

When we read from *Ṛg Veda* I.63.1 it looks as if the ancient rishis had a prophetic vision that one day the demonic forces would grow into such magnitude that they would rob the good earth of its contents and pollute the sky. Of course they had no idea of the ozone layer. Yet they could see the sky and light trembling even when the earth and its majestic mountains and vast oceans looked stable. Again in I.85.1 we hear the supplications of the rishis to save the sky and the earth. In *Ṛg Veda* I.113.20 the sky and earth are bracketed with *Mitra, Varuṇa, Aditi* and the ocean. The immense wealth brought to the world by the morning sky is remembered with reverence.

Indra and *Varuṇa* are considered to be the guardians of the sky and the earth. In between the sky and the earth, the poetry of life enters into the hearts of all beings. The association of poetry with the sky allegorically represents the liberating influence of the Self on the imprisoned spirit or *puruṣa*. It is that principle which enables the imagination of people to make homes, love fellow beings, form society and live with all the riches of the world. The same liberating principle, in one who has the maturity of wisdom, gives him or her a glimpse of the vast expanse of the supreme Self to which we belong. Until then we are given a world of poetic amusement between the sky above and the earth below. Immutable are the laws of the heavens, and the earth is ingenious to cause a million mutations out of which variegated life is proliferated. Ajātaśatru sees all these implications hinted at by the *Vedas*. So he says: "I adore the immobility of the sky," meaning the immutable laws and the generous care which *ākāśa* grants for all manifestations to have a rightful place in the world.

Ajātaśatru sees not only the vastness of outer space but also the vastness of the sky within one's heart. The outer sky provides for the content and form of all enjoyable things. The inner sky of the heart effortlessly generates all the modes of enjoyment as one traverses from the past to the future. Such is the beauty of the sky referred to here. Yet it is to be seen as only a small fragment of the Absolute. This is so clearly stated in the *Bhagavad Gīta* which says: "It is with one small part of me *(ekāṁśena)* that I have created this universe." Ajātaśatru goes from that one parti-

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cle to the whole to which everything belongs. This is a very fascinating mantra for us to ponder over for our contemplative discipline.

Mantra 6

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāyam vāyau puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovacājātāśatruḥ, mā mattasminsamvadiṣṭhāh, indro vaikuṇṭho'parājitā seneti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste jiṣṇurhāparājiṣṇurbhavatyanyatastyajāyī.

Word Meanings

vāyau - in the air; *indraḥ* - the sovereign; *vaikunṭhaḥ* - indomitable; *aparājitā* - undefeated; *senā* - army; *jiṣṇuḥ* - victorious; *aparājiṣṇuḥ* - unconquerable; *anyatastya-jāyī* - subduer of enemies; *bhavati* - becomes; *ha* - indeed; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said, "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the air." Ajātaśatru said, "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as the sovereign, as indomitable, and as the undefeated army. He who adores him thus becomes victorious and unconquerable as also the subduer of his enemies."

The common belief through the ages has been that this world is made up of elements. The ancient Greeks said that there are four elements: air, fire, water and earth. In Indian cosmology, five elements are enumerated: space or ether *(ākāśa)*, air *(vāyu)*, fire *(agni)*, water *(jala* or *ap)*, and earth *(pṛthvi)*. Gārgya already referred to *ākāśa*. Now he postulates *vāyu* as the Absolute. He has one good reason for doing so - in the manifestation of embodied beings, the part played by air is supreme. Therefore Gārgya thinks he might succeed in convincing the king that the air is the Absolute but the king is not convinced. Of course

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Ajātaśatru is impressed by the supremacy of air which was not defeated. It is *vaikuṇṭha. Kuṇṭhata* is the sloth and sorrow that affect the psyche and bring depression. The air is a remover of depression. Even in an ordinary case of breathing pathology we find that a person who is unable to breathe is tormented and handicapped from accomplishing things. When a person meets with an accident like drowning it is through air that he is revived.

Air is considered indomitable, victorious and all-pervading. But there is good reason for Ajātaśatru to turn to the qualities of air rather than promoting it to the status of the Absolute. One of the schemes we have been following from the beginning is that of the three strata. The cosmological heavens where the galaxies are continuing to spread is the first. We do not know the names of most of the stars and galaxies. Certain faint pictures are now slowly coming to our notice, taken by highly sensitive photographic gadgets fitted onto spaceships sent into the starry heavens. Nothing is vivid but one thing is sure - a great deal of subtle activity is going on which channels air clouds out of which the stars come into being. In the case of life on earth, ingenious devices exist by which all living creatures take air into their systems, not only for the purpose of breathing, but also for that of channeling air to conduct all the essential dynamics of life. Flotation in water and flying above the earth are made possible by special modes of propulsion of air, enabling animals to maintain their bodies in the environment to which their lives have been assigned. If we observe all the activities in which air has the primacy of operation, several volumes could be written about its magical power.

We are fastened to our bodies with air; air thus acts to imprison us in the non-Self. At the same time, to gain release and get back to the bounty and beauty of the Self, the intermediary to be taken seriously is air. From the beginning of India's spiritual history, air was considered to be the best friend of human beings. Other natural phenomena such as rain and all the other gods spoken of in the *Ṛg Veda* have to depend on air because of its great power of conveyance. Although in the Indian concept sound is attributed to the possibility of movement in space *(ākāśa)* which generates sound vibrations, the medium of vibration is air. When an explosion takes place, it is air that carries the sound waves across great distances. In the same way, air is

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the conveyor of various kinds of energy. For this reason, many praises are sung in the *Vedas* to propitiate *Vāyu* or *Vāta*.

The tempests race together after the gale; they come to him like women to a rendezvous. Yoked with them to a single chariot, the god who is the king of this whole universe passes by.

Moving along his path in the middle realm of space, he does not rest even for a single day. Friend of the waters, first-born keeper of the Law, where was he born? What was he created from?

Breath of the gods, embryo of the universe, this god wanders wherever he pleases. His sounds are heard, but his form is not seen. Let us worship the gale with oblation. 10

Mantra 7

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāyamagnau puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, viṣāsahirīti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste viṣāsahirha bhavati, viṣāsahirhāsya prajā bhavati.

Word Meanings

agnau - in the fire; *visasahi* - tolerant; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said, "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the fire." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as tolerant. He who adores him thus becomes tolerant, and his progeny too becomes tolerant."

Agni is fire. Although all elements are mysterious, *agni* is the most mysterious. As energy, *agni* can be both latent and dynamic. The history of human life and consequently of the earth as a whole underwent great changes after fire became a constant

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companion of human beings. There is the Greek story of Prometheus going to the heavens, stealing fire with the help of Minerva, and secretly bringing it to earth for people to use. This down-to-earth phase of fire marks the beginning of great changes in evolution and in the revolutionary strides of humankind. The time of the *Ṛg Veda* is said to be between 3000 - 1500 B.C. The *Ṛg Veda Saṃhitā* opens with salutations to fire.

Wherever there are combustible things, fire burns them with the help of oxygen. Oxygen is the main content of our living breath. Thus fire is connected with the catalyst of breath in our individuated lives. The body is considered to be eighty percent water. Water can change its temperature from freezing cold to steaming hot. It consists of oxygen and hydrogen. Hydrogen is a burning gas and oxygen is a catalyst for burning. But when these two gases intimately connected with fire come together, they transform into water. The nature of water is the opposite of that of fire. Water always wants to flow downward and fire always leaps upward. Both are cleansing agents but they use different methods. Fire burns away the dross. Water is a solvent which dissolves things and carries them away. Both can cause transformations. It is by moistening hard things that they are made flexible and plastic. Similarly, heat tempers by melting or hardening.

In the hierarchy of elements, the highest is the most evanescent and all-filling, empty space *(ākāśa)*. Next in the order of omnipresence is air. In the activating functional phases fire is omnipresent. As human beings have been deeply interested in this element of nature, many of its secrets have been understood both scientifically and poetically. Fire sits inside our globe as molten lava. It is a paradox that the inside of the earth is boiling over when its two poles are eternally capped with ice. Even things which look apparently free of fire, when closely examined, have fire in them in an invisible way, either as particle or wave. Hence it is no wonder that Gārgya thought that fire was an appropriate element to be put in the place of the Absolute. However, that was not agreeable to Ajātaśatru.

Narayana Guru, in his *Homa Mantra* addresses the fire burning in the sacrificial pit, saying: "Oh fire, your brilliance belongs to the Absolute." He confesses human ignorance of the omnipresence of fire. He admits that one becomes convinced of the presence of fire everywhere only when it reveals its heat *(tejas)*

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and brightness *(prakāśa)*. So he says *atastvam pratyakṣam brahmāsi*. After equating the sacrificial fire to the omnipresent Absolute, Guru says that the fire is a connecting link between the individual person and the Absolute. He says *tvadīya indriyāṇi mano buddhiriti sapta jihvāḥ:* "The fire is in us also because our five senses, mind and intellect are like the seven tongues of fire *(sapta jihvāḥ)*." The first two tongues are fire burning with black smoke *(kālī)* and with leaping flames *(karālī)*. Fire can be seen even from a long distance away. Thus it has a communicating power like the speediness of the mind *(manojavā)*. There is nothing which fire does not lick - it is a great taster *(viśvarucī)* which tastes everything in the world. When firewood burns it gives off sparks which spurt and flare. Hence it is called *sphulingini*. When the fire is dying, white smoke comes which creates enticing designs in the air, *dhūmravarṇa*. Light is one of the properties of fire. It has the spectrum of seven colors beginning with violet and ending with red. Where there is a blend of violet and red, it makes the most beautiful hue of magenta *(nīlalohitā)*.

After finding a perfect identification between the fire within a person and the fire outside, the Guru says, "You are a fit messenger to take our offerings of gratitude to the benevolence which we think of as gods above. We nourish our bodies by consuming grains and we enjoy fruits and flowers. Out of these we have made our offerings. *Tvayi viṣayā iti samidho juhomi:* "We offer into you the objects which are dear to us." Subjective life comes from the ego. It is in the ego we experience love and hatred, pain and pleasure, elation and depression. It is like clarified butter which comes from gross butter which comes from milk which in turn comes from the nourishment of the food which the cow eats. From the cow's fodder to clarified butter there is a progression of refinement to the most subtle of the things we handle. This is similar to our ego. So by pouring the clarified butter into the fire we symbolize the burning away of all the blemishes of our egos and renewing the clarity of our souls. *Aham ityājyam juhomi:* "It is with that intention we make an offering of butter." *Tvam naḥ prasīda prasīda:* "May you be pleased, may you be pleased."

The basis of this prayer can be seen in the *Ṛg Veda*, I.22.13, *mahī dyauḥ pṛthivī ca na imam yajñam mimikṣatam pipṛtanno bharimabhiḥ:* "The goddesses of the heaven and the earth are participating in this burnt sacrifice and they are here to give us their graces of fulfillment. The goddess of the heaven gives us

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śreyas and the goddess of the earth gives us *preyas*." Hence Guru says: *śreyaśca preyaśca prayasccha svāhā.*

Fire is also often equated with wine. *Soma*, which is alcoholic, is poured into fire. It not only makes the fire burn high; human beings also get high from drinking the fiery juice of the *soma* creeper. Fire is in the stimulation of our senses. Great restraint is required not to become annoyed because there is a continuous flow of stimuli from all the afferent nerve buds into the central nervous system, especially the brain. Although the nature of stimulation is provocation, that provocation can be sublimated. Ajātaśatru points out that fire is tolerant. The most shocking stimulation can be changed into cultural sophistication. Hence fire is said to be both Apollonian and Dionysian. When the fire of stimulation burns bright as a jubilation of the soul, the enjoyer of it becomes ecstatic and gets into poetic exaltations. On the other hand, when it stirs and confuses the lower realms of the psyche, all the base passions of one's animal nature are aggravated.

The *Ṛg Veda Samhitā* opens with the praise of fire where fire is considered a bejeweled master of ceremonies who is summoning all the shining ones to the sacrificial sites. The first mantra is very famous. It says: *aum agnim ile purohitam yajñasya devamṛtvyam hotāram ratnadhātam*. The word *purohitam* is significant because the English word "God" came from it. The sacrifice is *huta* and the receiver of the sacrifice is *hutāśaya*. The Persians took the word *huta* to Europe where it first became *hut*. Then in the German language it became Gott and in Anglo Saxon, God. In the entire text of the *Vedas*, no god is praised more than *Agni*.

Yet Ajātaśatru gives little credit to all the functional transformations which fire brings in the world of the non-Self. The entire phenomenal world of confusion and commotion *(samsāra)* is generated by fire, the fire of life. Ajātaśatru turns our attention to the very basis of all that, the Absolute, which is said to be *nirvikāram*, non-modifying, and *niśkriyam*, functionless. This paradox lurking at the heart of the Absolute brings a contemplative to a neutral silence where the pairs of opposites are cancelled out. Such is the wonder of fire mentioned here.

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Mantra 8

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ. ya evāymamapsu puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā mattasminsamvadṣṭhāh, pratirūpa iti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste pratirūpam haivainamupajacchati, napratirupam, atho pratirupo'smājjāyate

Word Meanings

apsu - in water; *pratirūpaḥ* - harmonious; *pratirūpam* - harmonious; *eva* - only; *enam* - to him; *upagacchati* - comes; *na* - not; *apratirūpam* - inharmonious; *atho* - also; *asmāt* - from him; *pratirūpaḥ* - harmonious (children); *jāyate* - is born; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in water." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as harmonious (with the Scriptures). To him who adores him thus, only harmonious things come and not inharmonious ones. And from him are born children who are harmonious."

To understand this mantra a reference to the first and second mantras of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* is useful. According to it, in the beginning, there was only the Self. Nothing else was throbbing. Then the Self pondered on the possibility of creating the worlds. Consequently there came the heavenly waters *(ambhas)*. Below that, just above the atmosphere, came the mirage-like rainbow *(marīci)*. Under the canopy of the rainbow came the tree *(marau)*. Below that came the oceanic waters *(ap)*. This allegoric reference to the genesis of the world contains many contemplative suggestions. Water is essentially a symbol of possibility. Many things are possible if water is conjoined to other causal factors. Water in principle is a natural law which suggests the sky as a backdrop and gases coming together to produce the abundance of water. The vaporous moisture in the atmosphere is hardly seen but when sunlight passes through it, the water particles glow with the seven colors of the spectrum. An automatic

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arrangement of harmonization comes, creating the great wonder of the rainbow. Just as the first poet was thrilled and fascinated by the rainbow and sang of it in joyous exultation, the poets of all ages have sung of its beauty. Human entry into the mystery of creation was through this archway of delight. Between water and sunlight and the invisible air a new alchemy was initiated.

The trees are nothing but sculpted rainbows which have assumed a concretization. The rainbow lasts less than five minutes whereas a tree, in its majesty, can stand firm on solid ground for thousands of years. The Grand Duke of the Sequoia forest in California is considered to be more than two thousand five hundred years old. At the famous Kanjivaram temple, Ekamesvara, in India, there is a mango tree which has been certified by scientists to be more than four thousand five hundred years old. In the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, the tree is suggested immediately after the rainbow for us to know that phenomenality need not be like a will-o-the-wisp. It can remain in the world of transactional utility with pragmatic validity over several years. But ultimately, the phenomena will show its impermanence. In the Sequoia forest we can see old and decayed trees. The mango tree of Ekamesvara Temple is also showing visible signs of decay. When things fall in water, death comes to them. Even the strongly built structure of a tree can perish and give way to the primeval constituents of matter.

In the *Ṛg Veda* the ruling deity of water is *Varuṇa*. All the basic elemental forces participate in the exploits of water. Nothing is more fascinating than water lying quiet like sheets of glass, reflecting the world above and the world on its sides. Ever since humans began holding brushes, the panorama of the watery expanse was their most delightful theme. All living beings are creatures of water. Little slimy substances in a drop of water which appear very quiet and devoid of life, if put on a smear on a clean piece of glass and watched through a microscope, will look like a battle array - so many microscopic beings very busy in defending themselves from imminent death and delighting themselves by receiving nourishment. Water provides habitation for millions of water plants and animals including killer whales. Literature is full of descriptions of the playful waves running over the bosom of the ocean or thunder storms of great magnitude which look like the ocean is trying to climb into the dark folds of an angry sky from where lightning flashes. The little rills of water running

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in all directions after a rain are so beautiful that we cannot turn our eyes away from them.

Like the air that we breathe, water enters into us through our food and drink and goes to every cell of the body. It is a great associate in the dissolution of all the food we eat and in making concoctions of nourishment in our digestive systems. Our thoughts, our dreams, our cold-blooded reasoning and warm emotional excitement are all fashioned out of water. Water is a symbol of our emotions. Karṇa, the hero of the Mahābhārata War who was caught between loyalty to his mother and to his friend, Duryodhana, was described as a tossing wave, unable to take a decision. The fish lives in water. If it leaves, death is sure to claim it. We are not very different from the fish, but the water in which we live is more vaporous than that of a lake, river or sea.

All this suggests how omnipresent water is. So Gārgya is not very mistaken in his thinking of water as a feasible substitute for the Absolute. Ajātaśatru, who knows the implications of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, the innumerable suggestions of water in the *Ṛg Veda* and all the praises showered on *Varuṇa* and *Mitra*, also knows that the greatness of water lies more in its power of harmony than anything else. One drop of water is, in principle and in reality, equal to another drop of water. Nothing blends with greater ease than drops of water. However vast the ocean is, it is only made up of water particles. Water is also engaged in the precipitation and proliferation of life. What comes out of water substantially has the qualities of water. Between the heavenly water *(ambhas)* and the terrestrial water *(ap)* all transformations happen in the world.

The moon, which is an eternal symbol of aesthetic appreciation, is ever-fond of caressing the waves of water. It is with such poetic fantasies that men and women admire each other's charm. That, in turn, causes alchemic changes in their genitals. When man deposits in the womb of the woman a watery epitomization of his being, he knows that the child growing in the womb is none other than himself. It is like the peace invocation with which the *Upaniṣad* commenced its teaching - the original principle is full and perfect and it is by an actualization of the basic principle that the manifested actuality arises. The man who impregnates the woman also knows that he will be his grandchild. There is no end to the continuous flow of the water of life. In the

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Ṛg Veda X.9.1-9 there is a hymn on the waters of life.

> Waters, you are the ones who bring us the life force. Help us to find nourishment so that we may look upon great joy.
>
> Let us share in the most delicious sap that you have, as if you were loving mothers.
>
> Let us go straight to the house of the one for whom you waters give us life and give us birth.
>
> For our well-being let the goddesses be an aid to us, the waters be for us to drink. Let them cause well-being and health to flow over us.
>
> Mistresses of all the things that are chosen, rulers over all peoples, the waters are the ones I beg for a cure.
>
> Soma has told me that within the waters are all cures and Agni who is salutary to all.
>
> Waters, carry far away all of this that has gone bad in me, either what I have done in malicious deceit or whatever lie I have sworn to.
>
> I have sought the waters today; we have joined with their sap. O Agni full of moisture, come and flood me with splendor. 11

In the previous chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we read that when a man was about to die, like a bird going to roost, the soul of the dying man saw in his own child his final resting place. So he told his child, "You are the Absolute, you are the word, you are the *karma*." His progeny, who by then had become an adult and an erudite person, agreed with the father. Then the father's soul interpenetrated the progeny's being. Bearing this in mind we can say: *AUM pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idam pūrṇāt pūrṇam udachyate*. The myriad properties of water which give us all the exciting festivities of the senses and the mind also remain as the greatest woe of humanity, the ocean of *saṃsāra*. Ajātaśatru does not want us to be lost in that. He wants to pull us out of it into the ever-harmonizing reality that it is out of *pūrṇam*, the plenum of the Self, that we have come to be imprisoned as a *jīva*. We should return to the Supreme, the one without a second, because we are that. Such is the compassionate teaching of Ajātaśatru given in this mantra.

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Mantra 9

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāyamādarse puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācajātaśatruḥ, mā maitasmin saṃvadiṣṭhāḥ, rociṣṇuriti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste rociṣṇurha bhavati, rociṣṇurhāsya prajā bhavati, atho yaiḥ saṃnigacchati sarvāstānatirocate.

Word Meanings

ādarśe - in the looking-glass; *rociṣṇuḥ* - bright; *atho* - also; *yaiḥ* - with whom; *saṃnigacchati* - (he) associates; *tān* -those; *sarvān* - all; *atirocate* - (he) outshines; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the looking-glass." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as bright. He who adores him thus becomes bright, and his progeny too becomes bright. He also outshines all those with whom he associates."

In the world of philosophy no problem is considered more important than determining the validity of the empirical world which we cognize through our sense organs and the interpretations of our minds. Plato makes this a great issue in his *Dialogues*. In the *Republic* he presents the allegory of the cave. The cave-dwellers, after a long period of conditioning, looked upon their shadows as their real beings. Only with the personal efforts of one who broke away from the fetters of the psycho-physical bondage did they finally discover that appearance is not the same as reality. Plato called the world of appearance "the visibles" and what is intuitively arrived at as "the intelligibles." After Plato, the pendulum of inquiry in this matter has been swinging for centuries, fixing the preferences of philosophers either in confirmation of appearance as approximate to reality or in determining the real to be inaccessible to the senses and the mind. After Plato and Aristotle, the subject was taken up by Plotinus and Por-

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phyry. Then, after the days of the Schoolmen, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Berkeley, Schopenhauer, Kant, Hegel and Bergson have written treatises either in favor of appearance or rejecting appearance altogether. The subject has also been much elaborated in its most fascinating details by Brentano, Kierkegaard, Husserl, Heidegger, and Jaspers, as well as in Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*.

In India, during the Vedic period, empirical experiences were considered quite valid and the pleasures of the senses were very welcome to the pleasant, hedonistic people of that time. They further enhanced the enjoyability of the world by transforming it into similes and metaphors for their allegorical poetry. The highly lyrical thoughts of the rishis were like a confection of praise, humorous satire, and contemplative themes for poetic effusions. This was followed by the period of *darśana* where each *darśana* had its own indigenous method of objectifying empirical phenomena with a proper balancing either of philology or logistics. The whole theme was given a psychological revaluation by the Buddhist philosophers like Nāgarjuna, Dharmakīrti, Dignāga and Asaṅga. While Jaimini and the masters of the Mīmāmsa school like Kumārilabhaṭṭa and Prabhākara generally supported the reality of this world, they gave a certain depth to things by noting the connotations or meanings of names which can go to deeper strata of esoteric significance. Afterwards that tradition was taken very seriously by the Āgamas and Nigamas which made *Tantra* a science in which psychic phenomena and ritualistic procedures were combined with mystical motivations.

It is in such a context that the example of the looking glass is presented by Gārgya. The glass can be a piece of polished matter with no spiritual significance whatsoever. Yet, when a person looks into it, the image has a one-to-one correspondence with the original. Even static shadows and images such as photographs or sculptures of a person forcefully bring to one's mind some aspect of the person who is reflected by the image. Between empirical validity and exaggerated superstitions, the imaged person is made potentially and psychically functional, even in religions which protest against graven images. No religion is more against idol worship than Islam. Yet the Muslims insist that when they give their prayers five times a day, the faithful should turn towards the black stone of Mecca, *ka-aba*. They do not see any contradiction in rejecting idolatry while making an idol of a stone

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which they cover up with a mythical story that the patriarch Abraham stood on it and prayed with his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael of which Isaac was born of a Jewish woman and Ishmael of a Arab woman.

In Christianity, which has sprung up from the tradition of Moses, it is forbidden to pray to anyone other than God and God is strictly mentioned as one without a second. Christianity agrees in principle with the oneness of God, but Jesus is to be accommodated as significantly different from human beings since he was said to be born of immaculate conception. In the Bible Jesus speaks of himself as the Son of Man but the church says he is the only begotten Son of God. The majesty, power and sovereignty of Jehovah slowly becomes pale and then sits with full glory on Jesus. Jehovah is called the Father and Jesus the Son. This compromise is necessary if Jesus is to be God as well as a historical person who lived a little after Caesar. It is here that mythology and history blend and vie with each other. When Jesus was crucified, he did not want his followers to be left in a vacuum, so he promised to substitute for his absence with the institution of the Holy Ghost. Thus the one God without a second soon became supplemented with two other gods, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Christian theologians got over this enigmatic embarrassment by bringing in the theory of the Trinity. Islam, which came afterwards, categorically rejects associates with God. While holding Jesus and Mary in reverence, the Qur'an says that Allah has no wife, Allah was not born of any woman, nor has he produced any child. Allah stands alone and his glory is not shared by anyone. He is the creator of all but he is not in anyone. The Gita also upholds this position when Kṛṣṇa says "Everything has come from me but I am not in anything."

Śankara takes up this problem of discerning the real at the very beginning of his commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtras*. He says that we are prone to two grave mistakes. We are ignorant when we say "I am," and we are equally ignorant when we say "You are." According to Śankara the Absolute is the only reality; this world is an appearance which has no reality in the past, present or future. He admits that in the world of the ignorant, for transactional facility, there can be a logic that suits the ignorant. It is only in that world that appearances have any value. According to him, that value is of no use because it drags the votary of *vyavahāra* into the folly of *samsāra*. It leads one to precip-

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itate and multiply one's suffering in the phenomenal world. So Śankara categorically denies the advantages of names, forms and all the rituals which human beings waste their time on.

The position of Śankara is countered by Rāmānuja who was a lover of God. He wanted to stand face to face with his God, singing praises to him. So it was necessary for him to inject God into a graven image of *Viṣṇu (salagrama)* and sing his praises in a thousand conceptual eulogies. Madhva, who came after Rāmānuja, gave a rational finish to support the validity of the empirical world. He said that whatever is, is, and it is here and now. All the same, he spoke of God as the only independent reality and treated everything else as dependent. In general, this is the story of appearance.

When Gārgya speaks of the reflection in the looking glass, it is not to be taken as a literal shadow person who is dwelling in the looking glass. The same reference comes later on in the third chapter where Yājñavalkya admits the *chāyā puruṣa* (shadow or image person) as a conceptual genus. He says the reality of water can be seen manifested as its appearance in the well, the rivulet, the lake and the ocean. The image is only a philosophically viable reduction of that reality. Vedānta philosophy admits the Sāmkhyan epistemology in which the spirit *(puruṣa)* becomes conditioned with the presence of procreative nature in which the constituents are the five elements and their operational dynamics are of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. The *guṇas* represent three varying degrees of copying a thing with their power of imaging. *Sattva* is pure and transparent. Therefore, it gives a reflection which has maximum fidelity to whatever it reflects. In *rajas* the reflection is faulty, like an image seen in muddy water or a distorted mirror. *Tamas* is dark and opaque and no image is visible in it. Pure consciousness or the through and through *cit* aspect of the Self, to which the *puruṣa* belongs, is reflected in the *guṇas* which animate the senses and the mind. With the individuation of a person, pure consciousness *(śuddha caitanya* or *pratyaṅg caitanya)* becomes distorted consciousness *(ābhāsa caitanya)*. Yet the light that is used for the imaging is that of the Absolute.

Ajātaśatru recognizes this basic aspect of the light which alone enables a mirror to image. He says that those who comprehend the illumination of an image as truly belonging to the Self by meditating on their own nature, become as bright as the original. Those who understand this comprehension also become

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bright. The position of Ajātaśatru is very well represented in the *Bhāna Darśana, Jñāna Darśana* and *Bhakti Darśana* of Narayana Guru's *Darśana Mālā* as the vision of the seer and the seen in the yogi. To illustrate this Narayana Guru installed a looking glass on the altar of a temple, substituting it for an icon, so that the seer will see himself or herself as the seen. This mantra is representative of the heart-secret of Vedānta. The image in the looking glass is to be extrapolated as the idea in the word which we hear, the impression registered by touch, the taste which gives the essences of things and the fragrance that can be spread out both in time and space, such as the fragrance of the personal virtue of a person like Buddha or Jesus persisting as their reputation through ages. The image or shadow person should be understood as a confection of all these.

Mantra 10

sa hovāca gārgayaḥ, ya evāyam yantam paścācchabdo'nūdetyetamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, asuriti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste sarvam haivāsminloka āyureti, natnam purā kālātprāṇo jahāti

Word Meanings

yantam - one who goes; *paścāt* - in the wake of; *śabdaḥ* - sound; *anūdeti* - arises; *asuḥ* - life; *asmin loke* - in this world; *sarvam* - full; *ha eva* - indeed; *āyuḥ* - span of life; *eti* - attains ; *kālāt purā* - before (his) term; *prāṇaḥ* - life; *enam* - him; *na* - not; *jahati* - leaves; (Rest as before.)

Then Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that sound which arises in the wake of one who goes." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as life. He who adores him thus reaches a full span of life in this world, and life does not leave him before his term."

In the opening *Adhyāya* of this *Upaniṣad* we came to know of

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the vital breath in the mouth as the redeemer of the various faculties in the primeval person. It was respected both as *ayāsya* (the one who dwells in the mouth) and *aṅgirāsa* (the essential nourisher of all the faculties). When death rushed at the archetypal *prajāpati* to swallow it, the first formation of life, which was scanty, protested and said *bhāṇ*. That made death recede a little. Afterwards, the *prajāpati* wanted to strengthen its positive internal forces *(devas)* against the dark demonic forces *(asuras)*. The project chosen for fighting evil was to make a recitation to gain an ascending power. Every faculty tried and failed. Ultimately the vital breath in the mouth succeeded. It took all the bright faculties beyond the reach of imminent death. Thus a person is said to have some time granted for the fulfillment of his or her programs of life. In this *Upaniṣad* as well as in the *Īśāvāsya*, the time programed for a person to live in the world of physical magnitude and the natural environment is a hundred winters. A hundred winters can be divided into four quarters. The first quarter is to familiarize oneself with one's *dharma*. The second is to accumulate means *(artha)* with which desires *(kāma)* can be fulfilled. *Artha* and *kāma* are bracketed in the time when a person lives as a householder. After one reaches fifty years, another quarter is earmarked for revising one's value vision and preparing oneself to be weaned away from one's activity and worldly achievement. The last quarter is for turning away from the non-Self to the Self, day after day merging deeper into one's immortal reality. Allegorically every human is on the path of pilgrimage which is to be trod until one arrives at one's own true Self.

When life pushed death back on the eve of their first encounter, a distance was established between them which is the life span *(āyus)*. When the vital breath took all the faculties beyond the reach of death the life span increased to one hundred years. In this path, from the moment of the first breath which came along with the primal scream of the child, life was moving step by step. Walking with the treading of the feet is not the only journey. Although the child began with a murky, unclear mind, co-ordinations were soon established between the senses and nervous system. Consequently every stimulus that entered the physical body and the mind had to walk to an active performance of cognition. The stimulus that goes from an afferent nerve bud to the central cortex to be directed to its particular faculty and be interpreted goes through a series of relay races intercepted on the

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path by several synapses. These are also steps taken for the path of consciousness to move from an interrogative irritation to a clear, satisfying explanation by one's intellect.

Once cerebration makes a semiotic development from an electrical impulse to an ideation, ideas are to be verbalized. In some secret area of one's central nervous system, called mind for convenience, vowels are linked with consonants and are flashed back to the organ of speech. Between the cerebration of the brain and the articulation of words a line of thoughts made up of words develops in consciousness. In each word, one sound unit is followed by another. That is also like walking with one step closely following another, with convenient pauses in between. Energy is required for this which comes from the food or drink served into the mouth of the person. The *apāna*, down-going breath, pushes it from the mouth to the digestive system. From all the corresponding glands, secretions move down to the stomach. This is a course of action which is similar to individuals walking to a conference center or a work unit. Once the foodstuff is processed, blood carries the nourishment to all the cells. The circulation of blood is another pilgrimage in the body which happens in a particular order. Our life-breath continuously goes in and out in a rhythmic manner. It is accompanied by an almost inaudible sound when one is awake. In some individuals it becomes noisy in sleep and we recognize it as snoring.

Our bodies are thus like cities in which a number of life forces are on the path of accomplishment and every one contributes to the voice of life. The only voice in our bodies that is usually given attention are our heart beat and murmurs to which the doctor listens with his stethoscope to see whether the rhythm of the heart is being properly maintained. In fact, such attention should be given to the specific rhythm of each faculty.

With every function a sound is produced. Gārgya refers to that sound as representative of the Absolute in which all relativistic functions take place. According to Ajātaśatru, the very existence of life and its search throughout a period of a hundred years and all the activities monitored by the faculties are all connected with one's life breath. That same life breath also sets the life span that is sanctioned to each individuated being. No one is sure exactly what that period is. Thus we read in one of the Upaniṣadic peace invocations: "May we hear only auspicious sounds; may we see only auspicious visions; may this body be

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strengthened so it can carry out all functions efficiently throughout the period of its allotted life-time. Ajātaśatru wants to remind us that we have a responsibility to make all the multitudinous movements in us rhythmic and musical. So we should try not to hear threatening messages or see frightening visions and we should not indulge in *karma* that promotes evil.

A harmonization is needed every moment of our lives. As this is mainly in the field of our life breath, yoga conceives of *prāṇāyāma* as the main discipline. Here *prāṇāyāma* is not to be conceived of as a mere breathing exercise. Every breath, whether breathing in or breathing out, involves an expenditure of energy. Therefore, one has to be consciously economical in spending one's given energy. The total energy in a person is like a fixed deposit in a bank. If the fuel is burnt vigorously without discrimination, as Epicurius said, it will be like burning a candle at both ends - the light will be great but it won't last the night. One has to be in constant liaison with every faculty of the body-mind complex. One has to eat moderately, work moderately, speak moderately, enjoy moderately, think moderately and sleep moderately. This is what the Buddha calls the golden mean. Buddha suggested holistic consciousness *(pūrṇaprajñatvam):* one should not allow any lacuna of idiocy or stupefied state of mind. One's sensibility is to be raised so that one has full recourse to one's senses and mind and uses the body as a fit instrument to bring one's life to ultimate success.

Ajātaśatru very well knows that breath is the link between the individuated self and the universal Self, so he approves of familiarizing oneself with the world of phenomena to which one has come with an appreciative mind. But one should not take the transient for the eternal. The prayer that has to be in the back of one's mind is to be restored from the false to the true and from the darkness of ignorance to the bright light of knowledge, and to be resurrected from death to immortality. Therefore Ajātaśatru is calling our attention to the unexpended reality of one's true Self and encouraging us to reach it by understanding the whispers of the voice that accompanies everything that pulsates in us. In his *Darśana Mālā,* Narayana Guru says:

> Going upward as *prāṇā*, downward as *apāna,*
> remaining actionless, the one alone
> beats, murmurs, and pulsates in the nerves.

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The sun rises in the east, becomes warm and bright in the midday, then sets again in the west. Night follows with its gentle moonshine and starlight. These movements seem like alternations of the cosmic consciousness to our view. Clouds which rise from the bosom of the ocean to float in the sky and to discharge rain on the farmer's crops have been taken for granted for thousands of years as a kind of gesture of the elements. Our conscious minds are so entwined with the physical events of the universe that we are unable to tell which event should be treated as belonging to the cosmos and which as belonging to our own psyches. The same apparently purposeful principle of the Absolute operates in our own psychophysical organisms. However much we try to unravel their mysteries, there are things we shall never know. We shall not discover the secret force which makes a heart rhythmically pulsate to circulate blood, nor why lungs expand and contract for the intake of life-giving breath and the purging of our inner pollution. The fine network of the nervous system, the conveyance of nerve impulses, the secretions from our glands and the metabolic changes in the body all operate with perfect inner coordination. What is happening in our bodies is a secret so far as we are concerned. For the most part what happens is autonomous.

The conscious mind has very little access to the correction and restructuring of these mysterious and complex faculties that mainly function as instruments of nature and as an integral part of nature's program for life on earth. Even the functions of the mind originate from a depth concealed from an individual's conscious awareness. When one attempts to relate the individual self with the universal Self, one turns inward and tries to pacify the stream of consciousness. The attempt is to still the mind and to look for the desired union in a passive consciousness. Narayana Guru here suggests that we should look to an entirely different field of operation to experience union of the individual and the cosmic.

The realm of *prāṇa* is where the sky and the air jointly produce the electrical circuits of both sound and heat. So in verse sixteen of his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, Narayana Guru makes an initial reference to sound in relationship to the Absolute:

A very vast wasteland suddenly
flooded by a river in spate -

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thus comes the sound that fills the ears
and opens the eyes
of the one who is never distracted;
such should be the experience of the seer *par excellence.*

Nataraja Guru comments on this verse as follows:

The sounds that open the eye of wisdom is an ideogram familiar in India and the recluse of full self-discipline is also a model popularly understood. The main point that we have to notice here is that wisdom gets established not by laboured graded steps, but that it happens when the personal attitude and the intelligence work together to usher in the result. No staircase is needed to ascend to wisdom. The duality between ends and means is abolished. Further, speaking as he must be from his own personal experience, this view has to be given the full credit it deserves as a direct wisdom teaching of rare value.

Whether taken as an idiom or a personal experience, these words can have only one meaning in the fully contemplative context. The ears have a very special and intermediate position among the senses. The eye is a window of the soul which is meant to look outward rather than inward. Distant noises coming to the ears of a sleeping dog or the cry of a child beside its mother in sleep, enter the subconscious efferently rather than afferently. Sounds and meanings come close together in alternation. The word and the meaning fuse together to become one event in consciousness. The conceptual and the perceptual come together closest through the ear.

Plato speaks often of the eye of the soul and of the limits of the visible and the intelligible. The circulation of the subtlest of contemplative thinking takes place by a kind of alternating figure-of-eight process within consciousness. When such an alternating process occurs between the poles that are horizontal and vertical at the same time, the resulting event tends to refer to the purest aspects of contemplative life when cultivated properly by self-discipline. The word and its meaning, the *logos* and the *nous* known in ancient Greek philosophy, would

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meet and merge into one meaning referring to the Absolute which is the real subject and object of all wisdom. 12

In verse fifty-two of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, Narayana Guru further says:

The sky will glow as radiant sound -
on that day, all visible configurations
will become extinct in that;
thereafter, the sound that completes
the three-petaled awareness
becomes silent and self-luminous.

Three references are to be specially noted here. The first is that all visionary magic will become extinct in the radiant blaze of the inner sky. The second is that the tri-basic knowing shall cease. And the third is the prevalence of an all-enveloping radiance. To understand this in full we should also read verse four of the same work which says:

Knowledge, the objectification of the value of the known
and one's personal knowledge
are nothing other than *mahas;*
merging into that infinite supreme
knowledge, become that alone.

Guru gives the test of that knowledge in verse seven:

Do not wake anymore, and without sleeping
remain as knowledge;
if you are unfit for this,
then keep yourself in the service of those contemplatives
who live free from birth, awakened to *AUM*.

This is the same appeal made here by the wisdom admonition of Ajātaśatru.

Mantra 11

sa hovāca gāryaḥ, ya evāyam dikṣu puruṣa etamevāham

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brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā mattasminsamvadiṣṭhāḥ, dvitīyo'napaga iti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste dvitīyavān ha bhavati, nāsmādgaṇaścchidyate.

Word Meanings

dikṣu - in the directions; *dvitīyaḥ* - second; *anapagaḥ* - non-parting; *dvitīyavān* - possessed of a second, *asmāt* - from him; *gaṇaḥ* - (his) retinue; *na* - not; *chidyate* - parts; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in the directions." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as second and as non-parting. He who adores him thus has associates, and his retinue never parts from him."

We are surrounded in all directions: above and below, in front and behind, on the right and the left. Even when we sit alone and think there is no one there, the entire world is around us. If we sit facing something, that shows that it has to do with our search. From behind us comes a drive or propensity. On our sides are whatever associates we have to perform our programs. However much the sun desires, it cannot come to this world without the dawn first painting the eastern sky with its vermillion colors. Even so, before the sun sets, the dusk comes with its decorative features. Dawn is called *Uṣas* and dusk is called *Sandhya*. In the *Ṛg Veda*, *Uṣas* is associated with the divine healers, the *Aśvins* (Gemini). They are reputed to be physicians who are constantly on the alert to restore the sick to normalcy. They put the medicinal herbs into potions that can heal.

Our frontal vision is connected with our outlook on life; we are poised towards the goal of life. We see our teacher, who represents the revelation, before us. Truth is being revealed to us. Behind us is the flow of life propelling us in our proper direction. The Absolute itself is considered to be the drive behind a person, therefore it is called *brahma puccham* (*puccham* is tail). A per-

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son's immediate search is for happiness *(sukham)*. On one's right side are specific programs to bring about happiness and associates connected with those. On the left are the general accompaniments of life *(moda)*. A man's wife is considered to be sitting on his left side. His father is considered to be the propulsion behind him. The continuator of his life, his son, is also considered to be behind. According to the *Upaniṣad*, father, son and grandson are the same.

No person is an island in this world. Thus, there are always associates. This is described in the *Svetasvatāra* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads* with the example of two birds with the same plumage sitting on the same tree. One bird pecks at the fruits, sweet and bitter, and, when it is weary, it looks at its associate who is none other than the Absolute. On seeing its associate, it overcomes its weariness. Taking all this into consideration, Gārgya says that he looks upon the other in the life of a person as the Absolute. Ajātaśatru sees the other as the non-parting who represents the eternal associate. This world is full of associates. From the time of inception we are attended to and there is no time when we are left alone. During the first eight or nine months we are protected and nursed by the inner devices within our mother's womb. Once a child is out, the mother glues her eyes onto the child and never leaves him or her out of her attention until her death. Such is the force of association in our world. Life is full of situations which are characterized by the relationship we establish with the main associate of each context. It can be father, mother, teacher, brother, sister or other children at school, it can be in the home environment, church environment, at the play ground or dinner table or wherever.

Life is being generated in and around the person with many associated significances. It is as if life has allegoric dawns now and then, dawn marking the beginning of an event. Where the dawn is, there the *Aśvins* are. In the physical dawn when the oriental sky is golden, it is said that goddess *Uṣas* decorates herself in beautiful ornaments and comes riding in a chariot to which are yoked twenty cows with a lot of milk in their udders. In her chariot she brings life-giving nourishment to feed all sentient beings. Even bees and butterflies and little birds are cared for by calyxes of flowers filled with honey. *Uṣas* heralds the day for the sun to come and wake every individual to his or her programs. The main associate implied there is whomever intends

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the welfare of the person concerned. The *Aśvins* are friendly gods. Hence in the *Ṛg Veda* several hymns are sung for the dawn and the *Aśvins*.

> See how the dawns have set up their banner in the eastern half of the sky, adoring and anointing themselves with sunlight for balm. Unleashing themselves like impetuous heroes unsheathing their weapons, the tawny cows, the mothers, return.
>
> The red-gold lights have flown up freely; they have yoked the tawny cows who let themselves be yoked. The dawns have spread their webs in the ancient way; the tawny ones have set forth the flowing light.
>
> They sing like women busy at their tasks, coming from a distant place with a single harnessed team, bringing refreshing food day after day to the man of good actions, the man of generosity, the man who sacrifices and presses the Soma.
>
> Like a dancing girl, she puts on bright ornaments; she uncovers her breast as a cow reveals her swelled udder. Creating light for the whole universe, Dawn has opened up the darkness as cows break out from their enclosed pen.
>
> Her brilliant flame has become visible once more; she spreads herself out, bringing back the formless black abyss. As one sets up the stake in the sacrifice, anointing and adorning it with colored ornaments, so the daughter of the sky sets up her many-colored light.
>
> We have crossed to the farther bank of this darkness; radiant Dawn spreads her webs. Smiling like a lover who wishes to win his way, she shines forth and with her lovely face awakens us to happiness.
>
> The shining daughter of the sky, bringing rich gifts, is praised by the Gotamas. Measure out offspring and strong men as the victory prizes, Dawn, the rewards that begin with cattle and culminate in horses.
>
> Let me obtain great riches of glory and heroic men, Dawn, riches that begin with slaves and culminate in heroes. Fortunate in your beauty, incited by the victory prize you shine forth with the fame of great achievements.

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Gazing out over all creatures, the goddess shines from the distance facing straight towards every eye. Awakening into motion everything that lives, she has found the speech of every inspired poet.

The ancient goddess, born again and again dressed in the same color, causes the mortal to age and wears away his life-span, as a cunning gambler carries off the stakes.

She has awakened, uncovering the very edges of the sky; she pushes aside her sister. Shrinking human generations, the young woman shines under her lover's gaze.

Spreading out her rays like cattle, like a river in full flood the brightly colored one shines from the distance. The fortunate goddess does not break the laws of the gods but becomes visible, appearing by the rays of the sun.

Dawn, you who hold the victory prize, bring us that brightly colored power by which we establish children and grandchildren.

Dawn, rich in cows, rich in horses, resplendent giver of gifts, shine your riches upon us here and now.

Harness your red-gold horses now, O prize-giving Dawn, and bring all good fortunes to us.

O Aśvins who work wonders, turn your chariot that brings cattle, that brings gold, and with one mind come back to us.

You Aśvins who gave a shout from heaven and made light for mankind, bring us strength.

May those who wake at dawn bring here to drink the Soma the two gods who work wonders and give joy, moving on paths of gold.

(*Ṛg Veda*, I.92.1-18) 13

All these associates which we have on the relativistic plane of life are part of phenomena. Thus they belong to *samsāra*. The non-phenomenal associate is one's Self. Thus in the *Gīta* it says one should raise ones lower self with ones higher Self.

uddhared ātmana'tmānamna'tmānam avasādayet
ātmai'va hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ

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By the Self the Self must be upheld; the Self should not be let down; the Self indeed is (its own) dear relative; the Self indeed is the enemy of the Self.

Narayana Guru, in verse eleven of his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, says:

"I,I" thus, all that are spoken of,
when carefully considered, inwardly are not many;
that is one;
as the receding I-identities are countless
in their totality, the substance of
I-consciousness continues.

Again in verse nineteen he says:

The bottom, the top, the end, that is real, this is,
no, that is;
all this inertial matter is transient;
except as a form of water could a wave ever arise?

Based on this identification of one's relativistic self with the absolute Self, Guru gives the ethical corollary to spiritual unity in verse twenty-one:

Endearment is one kind;
this is dear to me
your preference is for something else;
thus, many objects of endearment are differentiated
and confusion comes;
what is dear to you is dear to another also;
this should be known.

Then he develops a universal ethical policy in verses twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-four. In verse twenty-three he describes the liberated person: "For the sake of another, day and night performing action, having given up self-centered interests, the compassionate person acts;" and the bound person: "the self-centered man is wholly immersed in necessity, performing unsuccessful actions for himself alone." Verse twenty-four gives the final conclusion of the unity of the Self:

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"That man," "this man" - thus, all that is known
in this world, if contemplated, is the being
of the one primordial self;
what each performs for the happiness of the self
should be conducive to the happiness of another.

It is to this unity of the Self that Ajātaśatru refers. Here, as in all the previous verses, the wise contemplative king is leading us to our prospective liberation. In the *Svetasvatāra* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads*, the associate is *īśvara;* by simply seeing it the manifested ego is corrected of its relativistic weakness. Such is the message of this mantra.

Mantra 12

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ. yā evāyam chāyāmayaḥ puruśa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ. mā maitasmin- samvadiṣṭhāḥ. mṛtyuriti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāste sarvam hatvāsmimlloka āyureti, natnam purā kālānmṛtyurāgacchati.

Word Meanings

chāyāmayaḥ - identified with darkness; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *āgacchati* - approaches; (Rest as in mantra 10.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that Being who is in darkness." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him alone as death. He who adores him thus reaches a full span of life in this world, and death does not approach him before his term."

The Chinese have developed a theory of non-dual duality, yin and yang, in which the two opposite principles of the positive and negative participate in continuously shifting inertia and kinetics. Indians see the alternating phases of light and darkness. The

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day is presided over by the sun and the night marked by darkness. When light comes, there is a surge of energy in living organisms and when light goes the energy fades out and bodies go into partial inactivity. The opening of these phases is marked by the birth of an individuated being and the close with the disappearance of a corporeal body. These are eternal principles in which one does not look for any serious modification. However, human experience is such that when an impression is registered as having a name, form and varieties of functions, a continuous replica of it becomes a built-in memory factor in all those who interact with each other and consistently and contiguously see the transformation of a particularized form which always bears the same name or identification and which has predictable behavior with which others learn to interact with confidence over years.

Even though every night we sleep and are cut off from the forms we have been seeing, the names we have been hearing and calling, and activities in which we participate, the transactional life of the wakeful world is such that when we wake, we can pick up the thread of relationship from memory and continue with what was forgotten in sleep. Thus the alternating phases of night and day do not rob us of the companionship that we spontaneously build in life with all our neighboring factors. As human beings are social animals, they have devised convenient units for living together under the same roof. In the family, the seed-bestowing father and the offspring-nurturing mother are bracketed in a bipolarity. Social conventions have grown for them to be loyal to each other; the bond of relationship between the impregnating father and child-bearing mother is held sacred as the institution of marriage. The implication is that it requires several years of consistent and continuous relationship to complete the fulfillment of one's life. In a minor way during sleep and also when we are deeply engaged in activities where one's husband or wife or other companions are not directly involved, we take it for granted that, even in the physical absence of our companions, they are enjoying life and health. That trust keeps us from developing anxiety about our dear ones. A family unit can be of father, mother and one child or several children. In the course of time there can be hierarchies of parents, grandparents, father's-in-law and mother's-in-law, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces. If one house cannot hold everyone together, other houses that come in the course of time will be

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considered as satellite homes. Even if a cousin or uncle or grandfather or grandmother migrate to the other side of the globe, that does not change the intensity of the bond of belongingness. Any mishap to any one of them can flare up in the entire family as a tragedy. All will have pangs of pain, however far away they are stationed. All these developments have made the birth into family and inevitable death in the course of time occasions for rejoicing and for mourning.

Religions which sprang up to give spiritual counseling engaged in developing theories of speculation about here and now life and the mystery of life after death (in Semitic religions) or life after life (in the Hindu, Jain and Buddhist traditions). If we put the theories of the Semitic and non-Semitic religions side by side, one nullifies the validity of the other. When it comes to a matter of death, we become confused, our comprehension becomes wishful thinking, and we want a convenient doctrinaire eschatology or theory of death to help us hold on to the departed for a little more time. We have developed many rituals and so-called spiritual offices to relate to the departed and assure our care for them. In all religions prayers are offered or some ritual conducted to give the participants an inner satisfaction that they have been loyal and grateful for the companionship and loving care the departed one has given them.

In this mantra, Gārgya sees the importance of death and he identifies the total negation of life as having an absolutist quality. He therefore postulates it to be the Absolute. Ajātaśatru, on the other hand, still holds on to his original position. There are two aspects to be looked into. One is the totality of truth or reality that is beginningless and endless, that has no basic transformation whatsoever. Hence it never comes to be recognized with a name or form and has no individuation with which to act. That is *brahman*. The other is the phenomena of becoming in which natural qualities accrue into relationship within the time-space continuum where bodies take shape. They have an origin and an end and many functional phases in between. This we have been studying all through. The retention of the quality of *brahman* is only where there is no assumption of name, form and activity. This is considered to be the initial and ultimate nature of the Self.

There is a whole *Upaniṣad* devoted to the study of the single phenomena of death, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. The hero of the *Kaṭha*

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Upaniṣad is a young boy coming into his teens. He stands face to face with death, wanting to know its mysteries. This *Upaniṣad* has been commented on, elucidated, admired, and published in almost all major languages. Yet because of our fear of death and the need for some consoling make-believe to hold back our tears, several sentimental, apologetic explanations have been given even by great masters of philosophic intuition. But if you love truth and keep your mind clean, open and absolutely fearless to accept facts, then the *Upaniṣad* gives a straight message. Of course, for the purpose of developing a discussion, certain hypothetical images are conceptualized. They conform to the essential teaching of Vedānta which looks upon two phases of truth. One is the eternal, unchanging, non-phenomenal reality. The other is the ever-changing phenomena which is recurring, cyclic in nature, with beginnings and ends, each end suggesting a new beginning which automatically comes to another end. This theory is for the embodied person who needs a belief and a hypothesis to work out the cause of life in a meaningful manner for oneself and others. Therefore, whatever is said and believed should have a moral implication, a moral ideal and an ethical explanation. Good and evil are to be accepted as facts of life.

A span of life of seventy to a hundred years is too limited to understand what is expected of a body which has being, birth, growth, transformation, old age, decay and physical extinction. Therefore, one cycle is to be followed by another. This idea is found to be justified by the biologic rotation of life in the plant and animal worlds. Some trees roots can reach far away from the original tree and sprout into a new tree. Seeds with all the characteristics of the original plant can bring forth plants of the same species in other places. Birds have wings to fly from one place to another, roost and build nests, lay eggs and hatch; fledglings in their turn can grow and distribute the same species in other parts of the world. There are primeval life forms in which bisexuality is not necessary. In them sex is a convenient occurrence and the same animal can be male and female.

The Indian rishis did not overlook the laws of biology. They were equally in sympathy with the laws of physics and chemistry. They also saw the laws of biophysics, biochemistry, physiochemistry and psychochemistry. They used all these avenues to make a probe into death. Unlike the scientists and philosophers in other parts of the world, Indian philosophers and scientists

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are not distinct. Their outlook includes all the sciences, along with psychology, in *brahmavidyā*. In *brahmavidyā* the death of an individual and its return, with the cumulative effect of the energy that is recalled into the general matrix, need not have an identification with the previous name and form but has the momentum of the activity in which the person was engaged. Instead of using the mechanical language of modern science, the Indian rishis spoke in poetry and used symbols that can be interpreted according to one's own light.

In the *Ṛg Veda* there are beautiful lyric hymns about death.

Yama and the Fathers

The one who has passed beyond along the great, steep straits, spying out the path for many, the son of Vivasvān the gatherer of men, King Yama - honor him with the oblation.

Yama was the first to find the way for us, this pasture that shall not be taken away. Where our ancient fathers passed beyond, there everyone who is born follows, each on his own path.

Mātali made strong by the Kavyas, and Yama by the Angirases, and Bṛhaspati by the Ṛkvans - both those whom the gods made strong and those who strengthen the gods: some rejoice in the sacrificial call, others in the sacrificial drink.

Sit upon this strewn grass, O Yama, together with the Angirases, the fathers. Let the verses chanted by the poets carry you here. O King, rejoice in this oblation.

Come, Yama, with the Angirases worthy of sacrifice: rejoice here with the Vairūpas, sitting on the sacred grass at this sacrifice. I will invoke Vivasvan, who is your father.

Our fathers, the Angirases, and the Navagvas, Atharvans, and Bhṛgus, all worthy of Soma - let us remain in favour with them, as they are worthy of sacrifice, and let them be helpful and kind.

[To the dead man:] Go forth, go forth on those ancient paths on which our ancient fathers passed beyond. There you shall see the two kings, Yama and Varuṇa, rejoicing in the sacrificial drink.

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Unite with the fathers, with Yama, with the rewards of your sacrifices and good deeds, in the highest heaven. Leaving behind all imperfections, go back home again; merge with a glorious body.

[To demons:] Go away, get away, crawl away from here. The fathers have prepared this place for him. Yama gives him a resting-place adorned by days, and waters, and nights.

[To the dead man:] Run on the right path, past the two brindled, four-eyed dogs, the sons of Saramā, and then approach the fathers, who are easy to reach and who rejoice at the same feast as Yama.

Yama, give him over to your two guardian dogs, the four-eyed keepers of the path, who watch over men. O king, grant him happiness and health.

The two dark messengers of Yama with flaring nostrils wander among men, thirsting for the breath of life. Let them give back to us a life of happiness here and today, so that we may see the sun.

For Yama press the Soma; to Yama offer the oblation; to Yama goes the well-prepared sacrifice, with Agni as its messenger.

Offer to Yama the oblation rich in butter, and go forth. So may he intercede for us among the gods, so that we may live out a long life-span.

Offer to Yama, to the king, the oblation most rich in honey. We bow down before the sages born in the ancient times, the ancient path-makers.

All through the three Soma days, he flies to the six broad spaces and the one great one. Triṣṭubh, Gāyatrī, the metres all these are placed in Yama.

(X.14.1-16) 14

The Funeral Fire

Do not burn him entirely, Agni, or engulf him in your flames. Do not consume his skin or his flesh. When you have cooked him perfectly, O knower of creatures, only then send him forth to the fathers.

When you cook him perfectly, O knower of creatures, then give him over to the fathers. When he goes on the

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path that leads away the breath of life, then he will be led by the will of the gods.

[To the dead man:] May your eye go to the sun, your life's breath to the wind. Go to the sky or to earth, as is your nature; or go to the waters, if that is your fate. Take root in the plants with your limbs.

[To Agni:] The goat is your share; burn him with your heat. Let your brilliant light and flame burn him. With your gentle forms, O knower of creatures, carry this man to the world of those who have done good deeds.

Set him free again to go to the fathers, Agni, when he has been offered as an oblation in you and wanders with the sacrificial drink. Let him reach his own descendants, dressing himself in a life-span. O knower of creatures, let him join with a body.

[To the dead man:] Whatever the black bird has pecked out of you, or the ant, the snake, or even a beast of prey, may Agni who eats all things make it whole, and Soma who has entered the Brahmins.

Gird yourself with the limbs of the cow as an armour against Agni, and cover yourself with fat and suet, so that he will not embrace you with his impetuous heat in his passionate desire to burn you up.

[To Agni:] O Agni, do not overturn this cup that is dear to the gods and to those who love Soma, fit for the gods to drink from, a cup in which the immortal gods carouse.

I send the flesh-eating fire far away. Let him go to those whose king is Yama, carrying away all impurities. But let that other, the knower of creatures, come here and carry the oblation to the gods, since he knows the way in advance.

The flesh-eating fire has entered your house, though he sees there the other, the knower of creatures; I take that god away to the sacrifice of the fathers. Let him carry the heated drink to the farthest dwelling-place.

Agni who carries away the corpse, who gives sacrifice to the fathers who are strengthened by truth - let him proclaim the oblation to the gods and to the fathers.

[To the new fire:] Joyously would we put you in place, joyously would we kindle you. Joyously carry the joyous

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fathers here to eat the oblation.

Now, Agni, quench and revive the very one you have burnt up. Let Kiyāmba, Pākadūrvā, and Vyalkaśa plants grow in this place.

O cool one, bringer of coolness; O fresh one, bringer of freshness; unite with the female frog. Delight and inspire this Agni.

(X.16.1-14) 15

Burial Hymn

Go away, death, by another path that is your own, different from the road of the gods. I say to you who have eyes, who have ears: do not injure our children or our men.

When you have gone, wiping away the footprint of death, stretching farther your own lengthening span of life, become pure and clean and worthy of sacrifice, swollen with offspring and wealth.

These who are alive have now parted from those who are dead. Our invitation to the gods has become auspicious today. We have gone forward to dance and laugh, stretching farther our own lengthening span of life.

I set up this wall for the living, so that no one else among them will reach this point. Let them live a hundred full autumns and bury death in this hill.

As days follow days in regular succession, as seasons come after seasons in proper order, in the same way order their life-spans, O Arranger, so that the young do not abandon the old.

Climb on to old age, choosing a long life-span, and follow in regular succession, as many as you are. May Tvaṣṭṛ who presides over good births be persuaded to give you a long life-span to live.

These women who are not widows, who have good husbands - let them take their places, using butter to anoint their eyes. Without tears, without sickness, well dressed let them first climb into the marriage bed.

Rise up, woman, into the world of the living. Come here; you are lying beside a man whose life's breath has gone. You were the wife of this man who took your hand

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and desired to have you.

I take the bow from the hand of the dead man, to be our supremacy and glory and power, and I say, `You are there; we are here. Let us as great heroes conquer all envious attacks.'

Creep away to this broad, vast earth, the mother that is kind and gentle. She is a young girl, soft as wool to anyone who makes offerings; let her guard you from the lap of Destruction.

Open up, earth; do not crush him. Be easy for him to enter and to burrow in. Earth, wrap him up as a mother wraps a son in the edge of her skirt.

Let the earth as she opens up stay firm, for a thousand pillars must be set up. Let them be houses dripping with butter for him, and let them be a refuge for him here for all his days.

I shore up the earth all around you; let me not injure you as I lay down this clod of earth. Let the fathers hold up this pillar for you; let Yama build a house for you here.

On a day that will come, they will lay me in the earth, like the feather of an arrow. I hold back speech that goes against the grain, as one would restrain a horse with a bridle.

(X.18.1-14) 16

Funeral Hymn

For some, the Soma is purified; others sit down for butter. Those for whom honey flows - let the dead man go away straight to them.

Those who became invincible through sacred heat, who went to the sun through sacred heat, who made sacred heat their glory - let him go away straight to them.

Those who fight in battle as heroes, who sacrifice their bodies, or those who give thousands to the priests - let him go away straight to them.

Those who first nursed Order, who had Order and made Order grow great, the fathers full of sacred heat, O Yama - let him go away straight to them.

Those inspired poets who know a thousand ways,

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who protect the sun, the seers full of sacred heat, O Yama - let him go away to those who are reborn through sacred heat.

(X.154.1-5) 17

They also entertain the hope of getting the departed back into the fold even though the return is without any insignia of recognition. Thus the inertia in death is looked upon as a temporary event, whereas the unchanging reality of the Absolute is beyond time and space. It is to this distinction that Ajātaśatru calls our attention.

Mantra 13

sa hovāca gārgyaḥ, ya evāyamātmani puruṣa etamevāham brahmopāsa iti; sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, mā maitasmin- samvadiṣṭhāḥ, ātmanvīti vā ahametamupāsa iti; sa ya etamevamupāsta ātmanvī ha bhavati, ātmanvinī hāsya prajā bhavati; sa ha tuṣṇīmāsa gārgyaḥ.

Word Meanings

ātmani - in the self *(hiraṇyagarbha); ātmanvī* - self-restrained; *ātmanvinī* - self-restrained; *saḥ ha* - that; *gārgyaḥ* - Gārgya; *tūṣṇīm* - silent; *āsa* - became; (Rest as before.)

Gārgya said: "I adore as *brahman* that being who is in *hiraṇyagarbha*." Ajātaśatru said: "Please do not talk about him. I adore him as self-restrained. He who adores him thus becomes self-restrained, and his progeny also becomes self-restrained." Gārgya became silent.

The most spontaneous judgement that a person makes in accordance with his or her convictions for the time being is to say "this is." That is an affirmation of whatever a person is confront-

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ed with. The shortest form of "this is" is "yes." Another equally important judgement is not an assertion, but a negation. It is a negation of an assertion, "this is not." "This is" - affirmation. "This is not" - negation. The shortest way of putting it is to say, "no." Ever since human beings were equipped with the power of reason, the power of observation and the power of judgement, they have been walking through this avenue of "no," "yes," "no," "yes." Of course "no" was first because of the disadvantage of not having the proper equipment and faculties to discern anything properly. This is the first thing we have to note. At the introduction of the propositions of "this is" and "this is not," there was nobody to observe. There was no sensory equipment. There was not even a body. All that existed at that time was "no," pure negation, nothingness. And yet that nothingness was not the nullity of a vacuum. It was an assertion of a negation. If you ask "There is nothing?" the answer is "Yes." For our human minds it is very difficult to conceive the being of nothing.

Both in the East and in the West several philosophers have written voluminous books supporting the theories of "No" and "Yes." After many treatises were written by millions of writers there came a lone figure in the field of logic and rhetoric, called Wittgenstein. He tried the rational way of explaining things. After a while he came to the conclusion that it is dangerous to attempt explanation. What we should do instead is describe whatever comes within the horizon of our vision exactly as we see it. We have to begin somewhere then go to that which is adjacent to what we see first, then go from the first point of observation to the next. Some people can think only linearly. But some of the phenomena of this world are not linear, such as sound. Sound, like a ripple on the surface of water, makes expanding rings of vibrations. The vibrations on the surface of the water appear circular and linear. But they are actually spherical. Similarly, our power of observation and description should turn in all directions. This *Upaniṣad* presents a spherical description from the first starting point of nothing. Where there is nothing the immediate instinct is to fill it. It appears as if nature abhors a vacuum, a hollow, an emptiness, *śūnyata*, a nothingness. If there is nothing to fill it, nothing itself will assume the quality of being. Here the *Upaniṣad* says, "There was the being of nothingness. And that nothingness was felt as hunger." Here hunger is to be seen as a self-filling propulsion of nothing to fill the vacuum with

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being. It is a struggle. The nearest example is the inside state of an egg. There is a terrible hunger sitting in the heart of the egg as the sperm. The hungry sperm wants to fill the core of its hunger and in the struggle there comes the dichotomy of the yolk and the sperm.

Hunger was first given as *natveha kiñcanāgre āsīd*, "Before manifestation there was nothing here." We were told that hunger itself was the seeker for fuel. Death itself was the visionary of life. When death found itself confronted with the great need, it made a wish, *ātmanvī syāmiti* : "I should have an *ātman*." That is the beginning, which is very far from any knowledge of *ātman*. But we are sitting here with a mind which has the question, "What is this?" It is with that interrogatory aspect of consciousness that we get into the field of study, and make a probe. Therefore, *ātman* is considered to be the questioning mind *(manas)*. The first factor is nothing. The second is the desire to have a mind. And when you desire, what do you do? Then naturally you struggle, try to see, turn every stone, because you love your self. The one which needs the answer and needs the food does not want to perish and therefore there is an effort. The effort is self-glorifying, which is the third. It is called *arcana* - one who is worshiping himself.

Where there is effort there is heat, and where there is heat there will be moisture. Where there are heat and moisture there will be transformation of whatever is moist. Thus transformation is the fourth - *arkatvam*, the perspiration that arises out of effort. When the heat departs from the sweat, the watery stuff becomes hard. The next three factors are in the *arkatva*. Those three factors are: the water *(āpaḥ)*, the fire *(agni or tejorasaḥ)* and the hardened substance, the earth *(pṛthivī)*. The eighth is the heat that accompanies manifestations, productions, creations, transformations, etc. The ninth principle is division. The tenth is *āditya*, the sun. In the cosmos we first see the blazing sun as fire in the heavens. Then we see the effect of the sun's fire brought to everything on earth by the wind that blows hot or cold. Then we find the same wind entering our nostrils as our breath *(prāṇa)*. So the eleventh is the wind or air and the twelfth is the *prāṇa*. We find that the *prāṇa* is in our heads which face a certain direction. The head is the thirteenth principle. We face the east where we see the sun; that is the fourteenth. The fifteenth principle is one's back, the sixteenth the two sides of one's legs, the

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seventeenth one's two sides, the eighteenth the back bone, the nineteenth the belly and the twentieth one's two feet which are planted on the earth.

So, in our search for the Self, we have come to the body (twenty-one) which is structurally compact (twenty-two), every part intended to have a certain function. This is how the *Upāniṣad* slowly introduces us to the first manifestation. It was not yet named. At that point it thought, "I am incomplete. I am just food for death. How can I conquer it? I have a mind but I can't use my mind unless it can articulate." Desiring the word as a means for articulation is the twenty-third and the word *(vācam)* is the twenty-fourth. The mind and the word are to be united, coupled. The coupling of word and mind is the twenty-fifth, called *mithunam*. When a male and female copulate, the fluid of life *(retas)* comes (twenty-six). When the mind and the word coupled and *retas* came, they just watched wondering, "What is to be?" At the beginning of something, we have to give time for the new transformation to be perfected. That is how the year came, *samvatsara* (twenty-seven). When the first cell came, death opened its mouth, and the little form of life became very annoyed and said: *"bhāṇ."* That was the first protest of the world, the first defense of life. The self-defense mechanism, given here as *bhāṇ akarot*, is the twenty-eighth factor.

Naturally there is a reaction in the offender. When one wants to defend oneself there is an interplay with the offender. The offender meditated on it and said: "It is small, not enough for me to eat. But if I allow it to proliferate then there will be plenty." Then came husbandry, the growing of food. The primordial aspect of the farmer came into existence. Then it was distinctly known what food is and who the eater is. It found that the most efficient instruments are the mind and the word. With them, this being started to make many innovations. The thirtieth is *idam sarvam asṛjata:* "All these are created." Death is in the same person because the same person who wanted the means to live started eating. *Sarvam vai atti:* "One by one forms of life are consumed by death, hunger." The eating principle is called the *ātman*. The first meaning of the *ātman* emerges from *attiehe*, having the quality of *atiti:* "one who eats." The first aspect of *ātman* is that which eats and nourishes itself and brings itself satisfaction. So the first definition of the Self is the consumer who gains happiness. That is thirty-two. But then this being

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found that when it started eating it was a diminishing process and it was coming to a starvation point. It was losing its reputation, its energy, its *prāṇa*. One should retain one's reputation, one's energy and one's *prāṇa*. How to do it is the thirty-third problem. The thirty-fourth is that the body itself is perishing, because its nature is that.

The *Upāniṣad* upholds the theory that what you desire at the very fag end of life saves you. It gives you a chance to be reborn as that. Here we have the biologic implication of cellular growth. First there was only a cell which needed nourishment. It comes to a point where it cannot expand any more. That expansion, called *aśvadha*, is the thirty-fifth. Then it wants to kill itself so that out of it more can come. *Aśvamedha*, the killing of that which is increasing, is cell division in biology. Through cell division more and more replication comes. This is where the idea of sacrifice comes from - sacrificing oneself to become more, to increase. That is the thirty-sixth point. The first model of creation *(praja)* sets a model for itself. That is called *prājāpatyam*. This is the first reference to *prajāpati*, the sacrificer, sacrificing for itself. It sees life is important and it is equally important for life to die and come back again. So it is said, *sa punaḥ mṛtyuḥ eva:* "Thereafter, again death." Through death, death overcomes death. And one who knows this, truly knows (thirty-nine). This is a paradox. Truth is such that at its heart there always lurks a paradox in which two opposites are put together. *Mṛtyuḥ asya ātma bhavati:* "Death itself became the *ātman*" (forty).

This is almost like an incident in nothingness. No precaution was taken for good or bad. Out of the *prajāpati* the bright and the dark both came. That is forty-one. The bright *(deva)*, was the minority and the majority were the demons *(asura)*. Even now there is inequality - a few people are good and many people are bad. But quality compensates for quantity. Then the problem was how to get rid of the evil. They found that the word is a great instrument. The mind can use the word as an instrument to bring results. The *devas* in the *prajāpati* (the shining principles in oneself) tried to sing the glory of the Absolute, thinking that by glorifying the higher values they would become higher. But they could not. Evil defeated every one of them. Ultimately they found that the *ātman* was where there were three things: the sun *(āditya)*, the air *(prāṇa* and *vāyu)* and fire *(agni)*. These three qualities are in the vital breath *(mukhya prāṇa)* in one's mouth

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which has the warmth of fire, direction and goal orientation. When the *devas* turned to it, they won. Thus we come to the forty-second principle called the *ayāsya* which is also the essence of all the limbs *(aṅgirasa)*. It could take death far away but it could not defeat death. Taking death far away enables us to program our life. This furthering principle *(dūram)* is the forty-third. It is with the word-power of *prajāpati* that not only demons but also *mṛtyu* itself was defeated. Thus *prāṇa*, the primordial principle of life, gained the premier position (forty-five). For articulating any word, there has to be a dynamic of *prāṇa* or breath to manifest it. *Prāṇa* becomes air which brings fragrance and *prāṇa* becomes the sun which brings light to the eye. These are the forty-sixth, forty-seventh, and forty-eighth principles. When it uses the *śrotram* it becomes the directions. That is the forty-ninth principle.

The mind found that humans cannot live by reason alone. We need dreams, expectations, memory, fear, love, erotics, anxiety. All these come from the moon and the mind is equated with the moon (fifty). Now, after gaining all this equipment a value vision is necessary. Therefore the praise of food is given. But how do you eat? When you eat, that which takes the food inside, digests it and spreads it out as nourishment is *prāṇa* (fifty-one). *Prāṇa* being the premier, it makes all the other faculties sit around it so it can make them all instruments of consumption. That is the fifty-third principle. That indirectly brings the necessity of having leaders in this world to direct and protect (fifty-four). Leaders need the same sense of responsibility which breath has (fifty-five). But still the *prāṇa* is using thoughts which are words. So if there is a reasoning faculty to be developed, letters have to walk one behind the other to make words. A word with a pause and another word with a pause together make a logical sentence. First there has to be phonetics, followed by syntax which is followed by logistics. An order, an arrangement came in which all these were brought in - the world of words, names and contents of words. That is *bṛhaspati*, the fifty-sixth principle. *Prāṇa* and *aṅgiras* are to be with *bṛhaspati*, with the words that you speak. When things are named, labeled, that gives them a status of distinction. It is like praising. And that is based on the *ṛg*. So the *Ṛg Veda* is a natural process by which names are arranged according to priorities of importance. That is fifty-seven. When you want to propitiate naturally you do a

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ritual and show your reverence with your words and actions. That becomes like a sacrifice, a *yajña*, a performance. So the *ṛg* is followed by *Yajur Veda*. That fills you with joy. So you get into an exaltation and sing, *sāma* (fifty-eight, fifty-nine and sixty). Now you have enough material to sing praises and free your mind from lying down in the world of necessities. You are not cowed down by necessity so you stand up, you raise your self with your Self by engaging in *udgāna*. *Udgāna* is also called *udgīta*. This is the sixty-first principle which brings you wealth.

What is wealth? This world itself is wealth. The sun and moon and your father and mother are your wealth. Food is your wealth. Your word is your wealth. You come to have a new framework of equipment, accessories, assistants and associates. For your *dharma* to function you need this kind of wealth (sixty-two). What is the wealth of a person who uses the word, the wealth of a person who sings? Winning your appreciation with his or her musical voice, its rhythm and melody. You aspire to have a beautiful voice that pleases you and pleases others. Only if you are pleased are others pleased. You are the *svam* - "I am." Then you have to say *sva* + *ram* - "I am pleased." The highest wealth you can think of in the world of words and songs is *svaram*. This most beautiful music which you sing is the *sāma*. The ideal modes of singing come from the *Sāma Veda*. That is the sixty-fourth principle. When you come to that you know how to sing. So you sing *asato mā sadgamaya tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya*. You are singing pure wisdom by which a discrimination comes in your mind between *asat* and *sat*. That gives you a direction to move away from nonexistence to existence. We have already learned that we have two judgements. One is "not this." The other is "this is." *Asato mā sadgamaya* leads you from "no" to "yes." For that you have to see. But if your vision is dulled you can't see. You have to put all your mind in it. You have to know, as Jesus says, with all your mind and all your soul and all your might. Then alone can you say *tamaso mā jyotir gamaya*. Then naturally you are no longer a bound person. You are free from the *mṛtyu* or death which wanted to swallow you up. *Mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya* is the sixty-fifth principle.

We were blind and now we see: *atmaivedamagrāsīd - agre idam ātmā eva āsīd*. In the beginning there was only *ātman*. So it is called *pratyabhijña*. It was already there but it was not in

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your knowledge. Now it is: *prati abhijña*. That is sixty-six. That *brahman* was already here as my Self: *aham brahmāsmi*. That great *mahāvākya* comes at the beginning of the fourth *brāhmaṇa* as the sixty-seventh. Now we are thinking of the general and the specific. There are African elephants, Indian elephants and Indonesian elephants, but they all come under the group of elephants. There is a generality to which all the principles can be taken back, called *virāj*, the cosmic person. It is not a cerebrating self which has a body but that which cerebrates in all bodies. It is the sixty-eighth. When you think of it that way the many becomes one. In the beginning the *virāj*, the supreme principle, found that it was in trouble because it was alone. Truth had been established but it was pale. It needed to be enriched. The enrichment of truth comes only when it is loved. *Prajāpati* wanted not only to know but also to love. It could not love just itself. So it swelled to the size of a man and woman in an embrace and then divided. One half became male, Manu, and the other half became female, Śatarūpa. Nobody made them. He impregnated her and she became the mother of all human beings and then all species. That is the sixty-ninth principle.

The seventieth is not only the human society but the society of living beings. The society of living beings needs to be controlled by laws. *Prajāpati* became the law giver (seventy-one). In this concept of creation, physicality and the world of ideas are like complementary principles. The physical will perish but the idea will not. Thus the immortal is created by the mortal. A certain mode of life was precipitated which remains through all the species or generations. There is an immortal principle in the mortal principle. Shape became that most important aspect of manifestation. Evolution mainly depends on new shapes being formed. If there is a bird which has to walk in deep water and catch its prey from the bottom of the water, it needs to have a long neck and long legs. If afterwards that place becomes dry, it will be unnecessary for it to have a long neck and long legs. They are to be suited to the environmental necessity and the form has to change. This is seventy-three and seventy-four.

Two important aspects are name and form. The form has the shape in it which gives specificity to the function of the being. Thus the *ātman* became *kṛtyaviśiṣṭan*, specific with the kind of function which each individual exerts. That is seventy-five. Having equipped itself with all this, the one who created so much

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cannot afford to leave itself. Convinced of the abilities, talents and virtues which it has built up through ages, it loves itself. We want to preserve ourselves through our children or writing books or making monuments with which we can precipitate the same model to humanity. For this, there have to be knowers of the world and its secrets. Everybody is not capable of that so seers like Vāmadeva became necessary. He could live with human beings and stand apart as a wise person, a saint, who could lead the world.

Then society became more and more complicated. There needed to be a law giver and a law enforcer. The law enforcer naturally should be strong. He should have an uncompromising mind. He should be of an absolutist nature because he has to insist. So there came the *kṣatriya*. But if the law giver and law enforcer is a crude person, full of anger, pride, etc. then he is not setting a good example. The *brāhmaṇa* comes as a good exemplar - generous, kind and loving. The balance between the *kṣatriya* and *brāhmaṇa* makes a great culture possible, with higher qualities. But who is there to take care of them? A facilitator, the *vaiśya*, is needed to collect and bring food stuffs, and other necessities. Consumers need producers and distributors. But food comes only from earth, water, air, sun, wind, living seeds, etc. They all have to be brought together to produce food. There has to be a protector of the whole world who cares for all through dedicated work, the *śūdra*. Thus a four-fold division came to maintain society. That is the seventy-eighth principle.

Then they found a defect. Those who were fully responsible for the lives of others had to enslave themselves. They had little time to make themselves free, educated, refined, wise. So life was divided to provide for special training. That is the eightieth principle. The first twenty-five years are for learning one's *dharma*. The next twenty-five years are for actualizing it. The third twenty-five years are for seeing whether your life has a proper value vision. The last quarter is for finding a greater aspect. For that one has to move away from *samsāra* to the world of the spirit. These are the four divisions of life: *brahmacārya, gṛhastha, vānaprasta and sannyāsa.*

In the fifth *brāhmaṇa prajāpati* became the world's father, the provider for all. He made a certain kind of food for the *devas*, human beings and all other beings. That is the seventy-ninth principle. From this food we get different kinds of nourishment,

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and different life styles evolved. The body, the word, mind and the *prāṇa*, the inner regulating principle, constitute an individual person. That is the eighty-first. The person not only belongs to this world, called *bhu*. He or she also belongs to the atmosphere *(bhuvaḥ)* and to the heavens *(suvaḥ)*. In the Gāyatrī we use these three aspects *bhu, bhuvaḥ, suvaḥ*.

That leads us into becoming psychologists. We go into the great length and breadth, height and depth of consciousness, of the mind and the secret worlds in which the mind is established. Then we find that our minds have two companions outside - the sun and the moon. We live in time which is watched over by the sun and the moon. They give us two calendars, the solar calendar and the lunar calendar. The moon waxes and wanes. We are also like that with temperaments which wax and wane. Sometimes life is very happy and sometimes life is depressing. We may become very rich or very poor. These alterations in life are principle eighty-three.

Then we found that life regulated by the moon has sixteen kinds of transformation called *ṣoḍaśakala* (eighty-four). We learned about the physicality of life, called the *ādhibhautika*, which is the eighty-fifth principle. That takes us to the various ways of analyzing this world which require some kind of discipline, *vratamīmamsa*. We need to make ourselves responsible for our own discipline and also for the discipline of our society and the entire world. In order to do that, one's word, mind and *prāṇa* are all to be properly controlled. That brings meaning. We begin to feel there is some higher principle which is watching over us, guiding and helping; that brings divinity into our lives. This is the eighty-sixth principle. In *brāhmaṇa* six we found that name, form and activity decide everything. They are eighty-seven, eighty-eight, and eighty-nine. In the second chapter we have the dialogue between Gārgya and Ajātaśatru. The sun is presented by Gārgya. As a counter argument King Ajātaśatru presents the transcendent principle (ninety). Gārgya presents the moon and Ajātaśatru presents *soma* (ninety-one). Gārgya presents lightning and Ajātaśatru presents the brightness *(tejasvī)* (ninety-two). Gārgya presents space or *ākāśa* and Ajātaśatru presents the unaffected person (ninety-three). Gārgya presents air, and Ajātaśatru presents the one who is never defeated (ninety-four). Gārgya presents fire and Ajātaśatru presents the one who is very tolerant (ninety-five). Gārgya presents water, and Ajātaśatru

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presents the one who does not oppose, *anukūli* (ninety-six). Gārgya presents the person in the looking glass and Ajātaśatru speaks of the bright (ninety-seven). For ninety-eight, Gārgya presents the sound that is following in one's footsteps and Ajātaśatru speaks of *prāṇa*. Then Gārgya speaks of the person in the directions and Ajātaśatru speaks of *anapaga*, not departing (ninty-nine). It is very significant that the hundredth principle is that of death *(mṛtyu)*. We began our study with death and it culminates with death. Naturally, after death *prajāpati* comes as *hiraṇyagarbha*. That is the hundred and first.

This review shows us all the aspects of *prajāpati* and how many permutations it has undergone to arrive at what is now presented in the thirteenth mantra of the first *brāhmaṇa* of the second chapter. These aspects of life and death and innumerable principles are needed to have a balanced view of *brahman* which is indescribable and *jagat* which is describable. The world *(jagat)* is where we find dependence. In the indescribable Absolute we find independence. This is the wonderful way in which this subject has been sorted out and presented to us. May we always have this discrimination, *asato mā sadgamaya, tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya, AUM śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.*

Mantra 14

sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, etāvannu iti; etāvaddhīti; naitāvatā viditam bhavatīti; sa hovāca gārgayaḥ, upa tvā yānīti

Word Meanings

saḥ ha - that; *ajātaśatruḥ* - Ajātaśatru; *uvāca* - said; *etāvat nu (nu)* - (is it) this much *(iti)*; (Gārgya) *etāvat hi* - this much indeed; *(iti)*; (Ajātaśatru) *etāvatā* - by this much; *viditam* - known; *na* - not; *bhavati* - *(brahman)* is *(iti)*; *saḥ ha* - that; *gārgayaḥ* - Gārgya; *uvāca* - said; *tvā* - you; *upayāni* - let me approach (as a student); *(iti)*

Ajātaśatru said: "Is this all? *Brahman* is not known by this much (knowledge)." Gārgya said: "Let me approach you (as a student)."

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The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is said to continue the *Śukla Yajur Veda*. Therefore one would expect it to show allegiance to the tradition of ritualistic *karma*. It is exactly here that the rishi who is behind this *Upaniṣad* wants to show that it makes a flight from Vedic thought to Vedānta. It makes a drastic revision of the conventions of the Vedic era in which the triple *Samhitās, Ṛg, Yajus and Sāma*, become the groundwork for the ultimate teachings of Vedānta. For fear of being accused of heresy, the scholars who have previously dealt with this *Upaniṣad* have usually towed the line of ancient Vedic scholars with a doggish loyalty in their *bhāṣyas*. The few who understood the revaluation fought shy of the implications of the truth revealed by the rishi. Many Indian scholars who have gone abroad and established themselves with high positions and attractive salaries in the temples of knowledge like Heidelberg, Oxford and the Sorbonne, have become Vedic apologists, twisting the intention of the rishi so their readers would not see any drastic shift in the Vedāntic rishi's stand.

It should be especially noted that this *Upaniṣad* is not an appendix of the *Ṛg Veda* which is said to be the first wisdom literature of India. It is not even part of the *Sāma Veda*. It belongs to the *Śukla Yajur Veda*. The *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* was anterior to the *Śukla Yajur Veda*. Those who know the legendary story of the revolt on the part of Yājñavalkya which led to the advent of the *Śukla Yajur Veda* can easily see there is a spark of rebellion in this particular branch of Vedic knowledge in its aspiration to transcend many traditional lacunas in the Vedic reverence for truth and justice. Only scholars who have given some time to trace the history of the main clans of seers to which each branch of the *Vedas* and the *Samhitās, Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas* belong can pinpoint the special significance of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* coming under *Śukla Yajur Veda* and having Yājñavalkya for its main spokesman. We will come to appreciate his stand in the course of our study.

The book commences with a reference to the horse sacrifice with the glaring omission of any specific king for whom the sacrifice is to be performed. It looks like a deliberate slight to the reverence for tradition. In the context of the sacrificial tradition of *Yajur Veda*, all the ritualistic paraphernalia should be mentioned as a prerequisite before presenting the horse which is meant to be sacrificed. But this *Upaniṣad* begins with an outrageously poetic imagination of presenting an allegoric house which is in to-

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tal identity with the cosmic heavens. Not the least respect is shown to the traditional ritual. We have already pointed out that it is not a sacrifice done to bring merit to any husband-man and his wife. Ordinarily a *brāhmaṇa* does a sacrifice aspiring for ordinary pleasures. Here such pleasures are considered out of place. A king does a horse sacrifice to declare himself as a king-emperor. In this context the sovereignty that is sought is not that of a king but a truth seeker seeking the sovereignty of truth. This is like treading on fresh ground, opening a new vista, embarking on a fresh goal of life. This *Upaniṣad* is said to have been written between 1500 - 500 B.C. Yet, even with a conservative historical estimate, for over 2000 years no one has dared to look into the implications of these glaring details. As George Thiebaut honestly put it in his translations of Śankara's commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtras*, "An average Indian will shudder to question the tradition of his country."

However, we live in a new age where honesty in the explication of truth matters more than showing questionable piety. So we want to declare to the world that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is written with the honest intention of correcting many Vedic conventions so that truth can shine forth without a facade and without the "proofs" of dogmatic authority. The invocation given for this *Upaniṣad* is not to any deistic godhead but to the wisdom teachers of all ages, not just teachers but to all who are instrumental in presenting *brahmavidya* or universal wisdom. Thus from the very beginning it emphasized that this *Upaniṣad* is not a theological scripture. It is meant to be a treatise on the Science of the Absolute.

Another important factor is the total omission of a creator God and an immortal beginning. The thesis that is presented in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is mortality *(mṛtyu)*. A very reasonable methodology is presented to account for all manifestations from scratch, relating an effect as a projection from a cause. Yet the causal argument of the *Upaniṣad* is markedly different from the Christian theological concept of God as a first cause which David Hume ridicules, asking "If God can be the first cause, why can't the world be the first cause?" It is certainly a very bold step to give primacy to hunger without making hunger depend on the hungry. Here nothing is finding a basis for itself in being by asserting the denial of being before becoming. From the very start, the *Upaniṣad* adopts the dialectical methodology of polarizing

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nothing with being. The problem enunciated is not of a person, not of the world, but of hunger, which is identical with death. The quality of hunger is a self-generating fear of coming to imminent death. Thus the responsibility to avert death is squarely laid on the shoulders of death itself. No other philosopher has even dared to present a philosophy of this sort. There is no circumventing the truth for the fear of ethical conventions. Here it is frankly said that being the whole truth and knowing truth are not the ultimate.

Fulfillment of life comes only from love. Only a person can love a person. For that love to be fruitful, the counterparts should be male and female. If either of them had been created prior to the other, it would have an example of imbalance. Here it is the phenomenal one dividing itself into male and female. This androgynous origin of sex can be seen in the primary aspect of biology. All these show that the book we deal with is not to be treated as one of the many creations of a writer. Science is a recorded story of discoveries and inventions. Here, the *Upaniṣad* step by step discovers the magnum of system sciences, giving in its course production, value and managerial sciences. After the presentation of the social matrix of living beings where law and order was brought to prevail upon the incorporation of sentient beings, a law maker was postulated. The lawgiver was not to be a *brāhmaṇa* but a *kṣatriya*, the son of Vivasvān, the sun identified with intelligence *(buddhi)*. Law was generated by an all-seeing eye. The sun has two aspects. Its brightness illuminates the world. Its phases of sunrise and sunset are the norm to measure time. Birth and death are the two termini of time. Thus Vivasvān is generator of life and the extinguisher of life. The lawgiver is the protector and also the one who can award death as a punishment. In that the *Upaniṣad* places the *kṣatriya* above the *brāhmaṇa*. In this chapter it was a master stroke to first set up the *brāhmaṇa* as the master teacher, Bālāki, the Gārgya, and then to humiliate him as one who only had hear-say knowledge and no first hand experience of the Absolute. Then, he is shown to bow down before a *kṣatriya* with all the reverence of a traditional seeker and ask for instruction in *brahmavidyā*. The rishi was very diplomatic, making the king show no irreverence to a *brāhmaṇa* and yet literally snubbing him while generously agreeing to teach him Vedānta. Such is the revelation we get in this slight but most important mantra.

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Mantra 15

sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, pratilomam caitadyadbrāhmaṇaḥ kṣatriyamupeyāt, brahma me vakṣyatīti, vyeva tvā jñapayiṣyamīti; tam pāṇāvādāyottasthau, tau ha puruṣam suptamājagmatuḥ, tametairnāmabhirā-mantrayāñcakre, bṛhan pāṇḍaravāsaḥ soma rājanniti; sa nottasthau, tam pāṇināpeṣam bodhayāñcakara, sa hottasthau.

Word Meanings

saḥ ha - that; *ajātaśatruḥ* - Ajātaśatru; *uvāca* - said; *etat ca* - it; *pratilomam* - (is) an inverted procedure; *yat* - that; *brāhmaṇaḥ* - a *brāhmaṇa; kṣatriyam* - a *kṣatriya; upeyāt* - should approach; *brahma* - about *brahman; me* - me; *vakṣyati* - (he) will teach; *iti* - (thinking) this; *tva* - you; *vijñapayiṣyāmi* - (I) will enlighten; *eva* - however; *(iti); tam* - him (Gārgya); *pāṇau* - by the hand; *ādāya* - taking; *ut-tasthau* - (he) rose; *tau ha* - the two; *suptam* - sleeping; *puruṣam* - to a man; *ājagmatuḥ* - came; *tam* - him; *etaiḥ nāmabhiḥ* - by these names; *āmantrayāñjcakre* - (Ajātaśatru) addressed; *bṛahan* - O Great One; *pāṇḍaravāsāḥ* - O White-robed One; *rājan* - O Radiant One; *soma* - O Soma; *iti* - namely; *saḥ* - he; *na* - not; *ut-tasthau* - got up; *tam* - him; *pāṇinā* - by the hand; *apeṣam* - by pushing (him) again and again; *bod-hayāñcakāra* - (the king) roused; *saḥ* - he; *uttasthau ha* - got up

Ajātaśatru said: "It is an inverted procedure that a *brāhmaṇa* should approach a *kṣatriya*, thinking, 'He will teach me about *brahman*'. I will, however, enlighten you." He took the other by the hand and rose. They came to a sleeping man. Ajātaśatru addressed him by these names, "O Great One, O White-robed One, O Radiant One, O Soma." The man did not get up. The king pushed him with his hand again and again and roused him. Then he got up.

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Traditionally a *brāhmaṇa* was considered worthy of being approached as a wisdom teacher while the *kṣatriyas* were assigned the duty of protecting law and order. *Kṣatriyas* were considered less superior than *brāhmaṇas* in matters of wisdom. The *brāhmaṇas* were maintaining this prerogative throughout the Vedic period. In the present *Upaniṣad*, as we have seen already, a jolt is given to such morbid and crystallized conventions. Later, in the *Bhagavad Gīta*, *varṇya* (color grades) was redefined in terms of the quality of a person's value vision and actual performance: *cāturvarṇyam māyā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ* - "The four-fold color grades *(cāturvarṇya)* were created by myself on the basis of innate disposition *(guṇa)* and vocation *(dharma)* that accorded with each."

The earlier mantras of the present chapter give ample proof that Gārgya was not worthy of being accepted as a wisdom teacher by Ajātaśatru. What he had learned was only secondary knowledge; he was not guided by the unfailing intuition of a realized person. Therefore, in this context, Gārgya's *varṇya* does not qualify him to be a teacher of *brahmavidya* even though he is socially acclaimed as having certain hereditary prerogatives. The true claim for wisdom comes from absolute certitude and not from inane beliefs or speculations. That is why Ajātaśatru again and again insisted that Gārgya's exposition of *brahman* was not identical with the insight of a true knower of the Absolute.

In this verse, King Ajātaśatru resorts to something like an experimental exposition of the true nature of wisdom which is not confined to transactional verity. This is a difficult problem in spirituality and philosophy. In the Socratic dialogues Socrates was never at the end of his wit in proving that what is true for the Absolute should also be true of the relative even though the reverse is not true. First of all, Ajātaśatru shows that as a man who respects tradition he does not want to humiliate or ridicule Gārgya who came to him with a claim of spiritual superiority. In spite of his failure, the king still wants to recognize him as having the status of being respected on social grounds if not in the wisdom context. So he casually makes the remark that it is not customary for a *brāhmaṇa* to approach a *kṣatriya* to be initiated into the secrets of *brahmavidyā*. In the second chapter of this *Upaniṣad* this incident may look casual but it is not. Later on, there is a serious discussion between Yājñavalkya, who has the prerogative of a wise *brāhmaṇa*, and King Janaka, who has all the hu-

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mility of a man of mature wisdom. From the questions of Janaka and the attention he gives to Yājñavalkya, it is clear that Janaka does not ask for any new wisdom he doesn't know. He knows as much as Yājñavalkya. But many *brāhmaṇas* who are invited to his court and shown respect do not have the status of Yājñavalkya or the most revered woman philosopher Gārgi Vācaknavī. Before we come to the close of the *Upaniṣad* the *kṣatriya* king, Pravāhaṇa, is introduced as a man of great understanding and virtue who defeats the proud *brāhmaṇa*, Svetaketu, the son of Uddālaka, who gave the great dictum, "That Thou Art," to the Vedāntins. There also, Uddālaka admits that he does not know the secret of death known by Pravāhaṇa. Like Gārgya, Uddālaka also goes with proper discipline to obtain wisdom teaching from Pravāhaṇa.

King Ajātaśatru raises Gārgya by holding his hand and takes him to a person who is in deep sleep. The Upaniṣadic concept of the Absolute is that it is one and the same in everyone and it has no duality. Gārgya gave many names to the Absolute such as the Great One, the Radiant One, Soma, etc. Standing near the sleeping person, Ajātaśatru loudly calls these names with which Gārgya had recognized the Absolute. They wait for the result but the man continues to sleep. Ajātaśatru is not addressing the physical body but the Self. However, there is a block between the Self and the non-Self. For the time being, the non-Self is predominant as the inertia that is enveloping the Self. Then the king goes near the person and shakes him until he wakes up.

If the Self is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, why doesn't the calling of several names bring any result? This is a problem which is discussed again and again in spiritual and mystical literature. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James makes a sharp distinction between first hand and second hand religious experience. First hand Christ-consciousness is only in Christ. First hand Buddha-consciousness is only in Buddha. Those who wanted to imitate them were only seeing the reflected virtues of Christ-hood or Buddha-hood. Similarly, it is the Self that has entered into the non-Self, giving it a partial animation. It is like a person who has entered his own personal room. If he closes it from within, he cannot be reached from outside but he can go in and out at will. The Self is always itself and can be present both inside and outside.

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Śankara uses many rational and academic arguments to prove the ingenuity of Ajātaśatru. But the same is done with mathematical intuition by Lewis Carroll in his famous book *Alice in Wonderland* where he pictures the problem with the presentation of a mad tea party. When Alice arrives, the March Hare and the Hatter sit close to a sleeping Doormouse. Thus Carroll presents two levels of consciousness, one of the Doormouse and the other of the March Hare and the Hatter. Alice represents another aspect of consciousness.

> There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it: a Doormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and talking over its head. "Very uncomfortable for the Doormouse," thought Alice; "only as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind."
>
> The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it. "No room! No room!" they cried out when they saw Alice coming. "There's *plenty* of room!" said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.
>
> "Have some wine," the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.
>
> Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. "I don't see any wine," she remarked.
>
> "There isn't any," said the March Hare.
>
> "Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," said Alice angrily.
>
> "It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited," said the March Hare.
>
> "I didn't know it was *your* table," said Alice: "it's laid for a great many more than three."
>
> "Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.
>
> "You should learn not to make personal remarks," Alice said with some severity: "It's very rude."
>
> The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

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"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles - I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least - at least I mean what I say - that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'!"

"You might just as well say", added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like'!"

"You might just as well say", added the Doormouse, which seemed to be talking in its sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe'!"

"It *is* the same thing with you," said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn't much.

The Hatter was the first to break the silence. "What day of the month is it?" he said, turning to Alice: he had taken his watch out of his pocket, and was looking at it uneasily, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

Alice considered a little, and then said "The fourth".

"Two days wrong!" sighed the Hatter. "I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!" he added, looking angrily at the March Hare.

"It was the *best* butter," the March Hare meekly replied.

"Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well," the Hatter grumbled: "you shouldn't have put it in with the bread-knife."

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it gloomily: then he dipped it into his cup of tea, and

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looked at it again: but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, "It was the *best* butter, you know."

Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity. "What a funny watch!" she remarked. "It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!"

"Why should it?" muttered the Hatter. "Does *your* watch tell what year it is?"

"Of course not," Alice replied very readily: "but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together."

"Which is just the case with *mine*," said the Hatter.

Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to her to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English. "I don't quite understand you," she said as politely as she could.

"The Doormouse is asleep again," said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea upon its nose.

The Doormouse shook its head impatiently, and said, without opening its eyes. "Of course, of course: just what I was going to remark myself."

"Have you guessed the riddle yet?" the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

"No, I give it up, "Alice replied. "What's the answer?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Hatter.

"Nor I," said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. "I think you might do something better with the time", she said, "than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answers."

"If you knew Time as well as I do," said the Hatter, "you wouldn't talk about wasting *it*. It's *him*."

"I don't know what you mean," said Alice.

"Of course you don't!" the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. "I dare say you never even spoke to Time!"

"Perhaps not," Alice cautiously replied; "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music."

"Ah! That accounts for it," said the Hatter. "He won't stand beating. Now if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock." 18

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In the mad tea party, you can see how the logic of the transactional world gets stuck in its own confined frame of reference and cannot make a breakthrough to the world of mathematical certitude. Narayaṇa Guru discusses this problem at the very outset of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* where he says that the external senses and physical body are all lost in the world of inertia until they are roused from within by the wakeful spirit:

> The inner organ, the senses, the body,
> the many worlds known by direct perception -
> everything, when contemplated,
> is the glorious embodiment of the sun
> that shines in the sky beyond;
> this should be known through relentless search.

Once you know that it is the Self that assumes every name and form and gives relevance to all specific activities and transactions, then it is like the reservoir of absolutist wisdom overflowing in all directions. This is illustrated in the *Bhagavad Gīta* by the example of a brahmin's little sacred well being submerged under the flood of a river in spate:

> There would be as much use for all the *Vedas* to a Brahmin of wisdom as there could be for a pool of water when a full flood prevails all over. (II.46)

Then it is ridiculous for him to look for the specific location of the well. What he needs is water and it is everywhere. Where his well previously was, it still is, though with no special significance. Those who do not see this are like the disciples of Jesus who cried out in fear on seeing the storm in the sea. Jesus admonished them, saying, "Oh ye of little faith." Then he turned to the storm and asked it to be quiet. The storm was followed by peace. It is to this context that Ajātaśatru was leading the proud *brāhmaṇa*. All the book knowledge in the world does not bring the result of knowing from inside. Bergson gives many examples which make the distinction between going around a thing and knowing it and entering a thing and being it. Nārāyaṇa Guru speaks of this as no longer waking up to relativistic transactions and no longer sleeping away from the unbroken vision of the

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Self's omnipresence.

To illustrate all the intricacies of the problem posed here, Narayaṇa Guru has written *Aṛivu, The Gnosis of Epistomy*. He presents before us a man who is caught in the snare of uncertainty. Like Hamlet, he says that to be or not to be is his main problem, while one who has the certitude of absolute knowledge keeps his cool and does not have before him the baffling alternatives of dual appearances. It is like gaining a transparency both of time and space and not being caught in the world of identity crisis. This is one of the narrow gates of wisdom through which one has to pass to enter into the path of the Absolute which is described in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* as walking on the razor's edge. On the part of the seeker there is always the temptation to believe you have seen but as the Qur'an says, "if you have seen it, it is not Allah."

101108

Mantra 16

sa hovācājātaśatruḥ. yatraiṣa etatsupto'bhudya eṣa vijñānamayaḥ puruṣaḥ. kvaiṣa tadābhūt, kuta etadāgāditi; tadu ha na mene gārgyaḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ ha - that; *ajātaśatruḥ* - Ajātaśatru; *uvāca* - said; *yaḥ eṣaḥ* - this; *vijñānamayaḥ* - associated with the intellect; *puruṣaḥ* - being, self; *eṣaḥ* - this; *yatra* - when; *etat* - thus; *suptaḥ* - asleep; *abhūt* - was; *eṣaḥ* - this; *tadā* - then; *kva* - where; *abhūt* - was; *kutaḥ* - whence; *etat* - thus; *agat* - (it) came; *iti; gārgyaḥ* - Gārgya; *tat u ha* - that; *na* not; *mene* - was aware of

Ajātaśatru said: "When this Self that is associated with the intellect was thus asleep, where was it then? Whence did it come?" Gārgya was not aware of that.

The most common fallacy which even the wisest people entertain is that nobody has seen God and that God is invisible. When a person makes such a statement he or she takes it for granted

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that the term "God" is known to all in its truest connotation. Secondly, there is an implied expectation that every act of knowing pinpoints an object of experience. In the opening mantra of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* it is said *īśāvāsyam idam sarvam: "Īśvara* is permeating this all" (*idam* means this; *sarvam* means all). The concept of "all" is such that there cannot be anything outside it and the concept of "this" is the most specific reference which does not include any other "this." Apparently, there is a contradiction. When F.H. Bradley says that this "this" is different from this "this" because the "what" of this "this" and the "what" of this "this" are different, "what" means the human tendency to make a configuration of whatever can be attributed to the specific as its content, meaning, form, location in space, reference in time and so on. Thus "what" is an elaboration of "this." The specificity of "this" is tempered by the nature of "what." Conceiving and making a configuration of every idea without destroying its homogeneity gives "what" the bona fide to include many in it and yet to hold the plurality in unity. Water is water whether it is a molecule or a drop or a pitcher-full or a lake or the ocean. But if we succeed in specifying one molecule of water by naming it 'a', it stands in contradistinction to molecule 'b'. Thus the human cognitive faculty has a binary function which analyzes into units of specificity called "this" and synthesizes the homogeneous into a unity irrespective of dimension. It can even be the entirety of existence which the *Upaniṣads* call *sarvam*, all.

Even when we speak to another person, our eyes are fond of watching one or another special aspect in them such as the blue or brown color of their eyes or a particular hair which stands out white amidst dark hairs. At the same time, there comes no break in the thread of arguments which one is making or in the attention given to the relevance of the logic that gives meaning to whatever the other person is saying. Knowing is a complex process. The norms by which one determines the physical attractiveness of a person have nothing to do with the norm of the truthfulness of the statements which the same person makes. A number of norms or criteria can be held together while one actively relates oneself with one's object of knowledge as well as subject of understanding.

There are subtle ideational implications that are pertinent in making a situation whole, precise and helpful for objectification. At the same time, from moment to moment, consciously or un-

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consciously, we disregard the purport and meaning of many obvious things or factors that constitute an experience so that there can be continuity in our confrontation and in the registry of our memory. This aspect is an on-going experience of transcendence which is interlaced with our apprehension of the immanent. The recall of the transcendent in the specificity of the immanent is interfered with by the nature of an individuated person's rhythm of alternating states of consciousness.

We are using a psycho-somatic device to compute and generate a specific recording of objects that are presented to our sensory systems. The gestaltation forms a memory that can be vividly held in storage for recall. The convergence of the electrical stimulus that consolidates an image and the binding of it with the biochemical magnetic emulsion, so to say, of the receiving center take place at a single point of contact. That does not allow simultaneity of recording. There is a time factor in which sequences are important. There is a device in the cognitive system itself which is vigilant to allow each new item to be meaningfully added to it while what has already gone into consideration is stored in secret. To coordinate a whole idea the focus point of consciousness can move backward and forward and the homeostasis of determination can be logistically regulated. When this active cognition is going on, all the rest is held away from attention. When a person is totally asleep, the recorded memory is stored in the black box, away from the memory tag. But that does not mean anything is lost.

In our age we are familiar with cybernetics. So we don't have to go through all the speculative fancies employed by Śankara and Rāmānuja to account for the appearance of consciousness when a person is roused. We consider it silly to ask where the self-identification of that person was when he was asleep. That makes it imperative for us to take freedom in interpreting this ancient text. The spiritual implications of cognitive understanding are not to be mixed up with the mechanical device by which the cognitive faculty works in the central nervous system. Many people, for fear of being accused of showing irreverence to tradition, may not like our propensity to choose the simplest way of solving an ancient problem by resorting to all the advantages that the growth of human culture has now made available to us. We also agree with Ajātaśatru that when the person was asleep his inner state of consciousness was in a state of transcendence.

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Mantra 17

sa hovācājātaśatruḥ, yatraiṣa etatsupto'bhūdya eṣa vijñānamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, tadeṣām prāṇānām vijñānena vijñānamādāya ya eṣo'ntarhṛdaya ākāśastasmiñchete; tāni yadā gṛhṇātyatha haitatpuruṣaḥ svapiti nāma; tadgṛhīta eva prāṇo bhavati, gṛhīta vāk, gṛhītam cakṣuḥ, gṛhītam śrotram, gṛhītam manaḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ ha ajātaśatruḥ uvāca, yaḥ eṣaḥ vijñānamayaḥ puruṣaḥ eṣaḥ yatra etat suptaḥ abhūt - (As before.); *tat* - then; *eṣām prāṇānām* - of these organs; *vijñānam* - functions; *vijñānena* by its specialized knowledge; *ādāya* - withdrawing; *eṣaḥ* - this; *yaḥ* - which (is); *antaḥ-hṛdaye* - within the heart; *ākāśaḥ* - the Supreme Self; *tasmin* - in that; *sete* - lies; *yadā* - when; *tāni* - them; *gṛhṇāti* - (it) withdraws; *atha ha* then; *puruṣaḥ* - the self (has); *svapiti* - *svapiti* (sleeper); *etat* - this; *nāma* - name; *tat* - then; *prāṇaḥ* - the nose; *gṛhītaḥ* - withdrawn; *eva* - verily; *bhavati* - is; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *gṛhītā* - (is) withdrawn; *cakṣuḥ* - the eye; *gṛhītam* - (is) withdrawn; *śrotram* - the ear; *gṛhītam, manaḥ* - the mind; *gṛhītam* - (is) withdrawn

Ajātaśatru said: "When this self that is associated with the intellect is thus asleep, it withdraws by its specialized knowledge the functions of the organs, and lies in the Supreme Self that is within the heart. When it withdraws the organs it has the name of *svapiti*. Then verily the nose is withdrawn, the organ of speech is withdrawn, the eye is withdrawn, the ear is withdrawn, and the mind is withdrawn.

According to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, there is no need for a separate creator as conceived by the Semitic religions. The best example to understand life is to think of the environmental

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factors which are like facilitators. The principle of heredity is placed in the environment. In an egg the seed or sperm stands for the hereditary principle. The yolk, shell and external world are the environment. Inside the shell and yolk are three graded internal environments. What is outside the shell is an external environment which consists of one sun (which also means fire and heat), one sky (which also means the space into which one's being can be projected), one air (vital energy), one water (which makes all the combustions of growth and change possible with the alchemy of transformation), and one earth (which is the basic material to be fashioned into an inhering principle of the propensities of life). Slowly the interior environmental factors are absorbed into the body-making, whether it is of a fetus, seedling, fledgling or whatever. When all the interior equipment has been fashioned out of the nutrition, there is a well-molded device in which the most obvious factor is the food element that has transformed into the vital juices, cells and tissues, the major faculties of a living organism and its external skin, feathers, bark or scales. At that stage, the interior environment is absorbed and the living being comes into the open environment.

There the law of life is on one side and on the other are elemental factors which obey the law of life in terms of cause and effect. When a seed breaks open, the breaking of the shell is caused by the expansion of the sprout and the root. Sunlight is there for the cotyledon to photosynthesize food for the seedling. So it holds out horizontally to capture as much sunlight, carbon dioxide and moisture as possible, while the root starts searching for water below. The seed's need is a cause, first generated by hunger. In a sapling, sprouts which were turning into leaves stop after a while and project branches, varying their directions so that the tree can balance itself when the wind blows. Without going into all the details we can see one principle in operation - a specific cause generating a number of specific effects. After a certain growth, maturity comes to a plant and it brings forth flowers. In the case of human children, puberty comes. In the case of chickens, they grow to become amorous and have love antics with other chickens. Sex being a dominant feature of life, male and female show distinctions from each other. The body built by food is almost immediately followed by the more subtle factor of vital breath assuming a number of functions for internal management and to cope with the external environment. These

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are called *annamaya* and *prāṇamaya*.

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* there is a graded study of the development of life through food, vital breath and the mind which can vary from the proto-mind to the meta-mind. Mind is like an instructor within the individual which teaches tasks. Learning a task is *vijñāna* (*Jñāna* - knowledge; *vijñāna* - specialized knowledge). From the farthest reach of the sky, sun and stars to the subterranean factors of gases, minerals, and salts, there is a continuous interaction involving both the individual bodies of living organisms and classes of organisms in the scheme of incorporated life which covers vegetables, insects, rodents, mammals, etc. In spite of all the variegations that we see, there is only one biotic law. The variations within the principle of biology are taken care of by the one element that can become varieties of elements. The chemical variegations of structure stem from one physical principle. The entire network is strung on a single principle, a dialectical interplay of order falling into chaos and chaos reassembling into order. There is an alternation between creation and destruction which together display the characteristics of life. Harmony is the law of pulsation. Like the constant "h" of Max Plank, there is the rhythm of being periodically assured by happiness in spite of all the misery and distress to which living beings are exposed.

In the present mantra King Ajātaśatru calls it *svapiti* - holding oneself to the basic principle and value of life which is none other than the glow of the Absolute. Now and again one withdraws into the *svapiti*. When the eye withdraws it cannot see; when the ear withdraws, it cannot hear; when the mind withdraws it cannot know. The entire scheme of life over millennia with countless millions of programs all over the world is epitomized. All the instrumentation of life is hushed into periodic rest and then arousal when rest is attained. Between the expansion and the contraction of the heart there is a lull, a rest. Between the expression of one idea and another, there is a pause. Between one day and the next there is a withdrawal into sleep. All the arousal of energy during childhood and adolescence is brought to a discipline of harmonization in the youthful period, then turned into a period of conservation and preservation. Finally the system unwinds and goes gently into death. Death itself is a pause before the restarting of the whole game. Such is the vision of life which Ajātaśatru is imparting to Gārgya in this mantra.

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Mantra 18

sa yatraitatsvapnyayā carati te hāsya lokāḥ; taduteva mahārājo bhavati, uteva mahābrāhmaṇaḥ, utevoccāvacam nigacchati; sa yathā mahārājo jānapadān gṛhītva sve janapade yathākāmam parivarteta, evamevaiṣa etatprāṇān gṛhītva sve śarīre yathākāmam parivartate

Word Meanings

saḥ - it (the self); *yatra* - when; *svapnyayā* - in the dream state; *etat* - thus; *carati* - stays; *te ha* - these; *asya* - its; *lokāḥ* - (are) results of past work; *tat* - then; *uta* - either; *mahārājaḥ* - a great king; *iva* - as it were; *uta* - or; *mahābrāhmaṇaḥ* - a worthy *brāhmaṇa;* *iva* - as it were; *bhavati* - becomes; *uta* - or; *ucca-avacam* - high or low states; *nigacchati* - reaches; *iva* - as it were; *saḥ* - any; *mahārājaḥ* - great king; *yathā* - as; *jānapadān* - (his) citizens; *gṛhītvā* - taking; *sve* - his own; *janapade* - kingdom; *yathākāmam* - at will; *parivarteta* - may go about; *evam eva* - just so; *eṣaḥ* - it (the self); *prāṇān* - the organs; *gṛhītvā* - taking; *sve śarīre* - in its own body; *yathākāmam* - at will; *etat* - thus; *parivartate* - goes about

When the self thus stays in the dream state, these are the results of its past work: it then becomes either a great king, as it were, or a worthy *brāhmaṇa*, as it were, or reaches high and low states, as it were. As a great king may take his (retinue of) citizens and go about at will in his own kingdom, so does this self thus take the organs and go about at will in its own body.

In the seventeenth mantra we saw a transaction between wakeful people and a person in sleep. When Ajātaśatru called a sleeping person with all the names suggested by Gārgya as belonging to the Self, there was no response. It was as if that person was in an unconscious state and the cognitive agency was

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not in him. When the king shook the man he woke up as if a man who had gone somewhere returned. So Gārgya asked the king where that man had gone. It is in answer to that question that Ajātaśatru says: "When the self thus stays in the dream state; the results of its past works become active even in the unconscious. A new volitional agency enters into the dormant ego and exerts a will of its own like a king or an important person. It goes out into another realm of existence which is created by the individual's self-founded light called *taijasa*." According to the *karma* which has deposited certain tendencies in the memory-storing self *(citta)*, it becomes oriented to create a world which is like a theatrical expression of wish-fulfillment or apprehensions. After a while, when the body's stamina has been somewhat restored, this second volitional ego becomes alerted to return to its transactional status and the sleeping man comes back to wakeful consciousness.

The two realms of wakeful consciousness and dream consciousness are like two entirely different worlds structured on tendencies or factors which are psychophysical in the wakeful state and purely subjective in the dream state. The body has to function in the autonomous areas to provide for the vital energies of breath, circulation of blood, supply of oxygen to brain and other faculties, distribution of nourishment from the last food taken and maintenance of the metabolic balance. The physiological foundations of the wakeful and dream states have to meet at a common ground. Otherwise they can deviate from each other in an unimaginably fantastic manner. From time immemorial, wherever people have lived in this world, they have observed dream phenomena and made many theories about it. In this *Upaniṣad* there will be other occasions for us to discuss dream in detail. However, it is appropriate that we record here a few references.

This mantra is commented on by Śankara in the form of a dialogue between a questioner and himself as the responding person. Śankara's presumption is that dream experiences are superimposed on the self because of certain conditional aspects of wakeful life which remain in the mind as an influencing aspect of ignorance. To this the questioner objects: "Although the dreaming self is disassociated from the body and organs in the dream state, we observe it to be possessed of relative attributes: it is happy, miserable, bereft of friends, grieves or is delighted as in

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the waking state. Therefore it must be possessed of attributes such as grief and delusion which are not superimposed on it by the error brought on by its contact with the body and organs." Śankara replies: "No, because those experiences are false. When it, the self in question, remains in the dream state which is a kind of experience, what are its achievements, results of past works *(karma)*? They are not true achievements. They are absolutely false. In the mantra it is said: 'as it were', and they are also contradicted by waking experience. Therefore the self is not actually connected with grief, delusion, etc." Objection: "As its achievements of the waking state are not contradicted in that state, so its achievement such as becoming a king or *brāhmaṇa* or a position high or low are not contradicted in the dream state. Just as in the wakeful state the cognitive self experiences pain and pleasure, in the dream state also the cognitive self experiences pain and pleasure." Here Śankara goes back to his theory of *māyā* and superimposition and denies the validity of the transactions in the wakeful state itself. Therefore he is not willing to give any validity to dream experience.

In ancient India, i.e., about one thousand years before Śankara, there lived a great surgeon of Āyurveda, Suśruta. He considered the dreams of a patient very important in the diagnosis and treatment of disease. He took notice of the variations in dream symbols that are indicative of the body, mind and spirit state of the patient and also classified the mind of the dreamer in terms of the humors of which Hippocrates also spoke such as the bile *(pitta)*, phlegm *(kapha)*, the winds *(vāda)*, and melancholy *(saṃnipāta)*. He also recommended remedial measures to change a patient's subjective consciousness which manipulates dreams.

Two other ancient people who gave attention to dreams were Plato and Aristotle. Of course, what we attribute to Plato also belongs to Socrates. In Plato's *Republic* Socrates has a discussion with Glaucon in which the comparative merits of wakeful and dream consciousness are analyzed. While the wakeful reasoning is credited as sound, factual and valid, the dream consciousness is rated as an opinion. Plato gives another instance of Socrates obeying a dream. Socrates says:

> In the course of my life I have often had intimations in dreams that "I should make music." The same dream came to me sometimes in one form, and sometimes in

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another, but always saying the same or nearly the same words: Make and cultivate music, said the dream. And hitherto I had imagined that this was only intended to exhort and encourage me in the study of philosophy, which has always been the pursuit of my life, and is the noblest and best of music. The dream was bidding me to do what I was already doing, in the same way that a competitor in race is bidden by the spectators to run when he is already running. But I was not certain of this, as the dream might have meant music in the popular sense of the word, and being under sentence of death, and the festival giving me a respite, I thought that I should be safer if I satisfied the scruple, and, in obedience to the dream, composed a few verses before I departed. And first, I made a hymn in honor of the god of the festival, and then considering that a poet, if he is really to be a poet or maker, should not only put words together but make stories, and as I have no invention, I took some fables of Aesop, which I had ready at hand and knew, and turned them into verse. [19]

When we come to Aristotle, on whose thoughts are based almost all the fundamentals of Western science, we find a very sober and rational consideration of the phenomena of dream. All the same, what para-psychologists today consider as fit subject matter for study is suggested by in Aristotle's writings on dreams. In Henri Bergson we have a theory of dream which is closer to the Indian concept. The Indian version is that dream phenomena are generated by the incipient memories which are lying at the bottom of a person's self, not only of the *karmas* acquired in this birth but also those acquired in previous births. Bergson says: "Behind the memories which are concerned in our present occupation and are revealed by means of it, there are others, thousands of others, stored below the scene illuminated by consciousness." Two Indian theories are quite relevant to this statement - incipient memory *(vāsanā)* and conceptualization *(pratibha)*. They come as a reckoner of all immediate experience to give it a pyramid-type basis without which the perceptual indications are very inadequate for the individual to put in a proper perspective and to properly know its relevance.

Bergson continues:

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Yes, I believe indeed that all our past life is there, preserved even to the most infinitesimal details, and that we forget nothing, and that all that we have felt, perceived, thought, willed, from the first awakening of our consciousness, survives indestructibly. But the memories which are preserved in these obscure depths are there in the state of invisible phantoms. They aspire, perhaps, to the light, but they do not even try to rise to it; they know that it is impossible and that I, as a living and acting being, have something else to do than to occupy myself with them. 20

Then he explains how these incipient memories present themselves in a dream. It also is interesting to look into the dream theories both in Freudian dream analysis and Jungian psycho-analytical studies. What is most interesting in the context of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is that it clearly marks all states of consciousness as needing further elucidation to complete the inquiry into the nature of the science of the Absolute *(brahmavidyā)*. It does not slight any experience that human beings have and each item is given an appropriate place in the epistemology, methodology and axiology of *brahmavidyā*.

Mantra 19

atha yadā suṣupto bhavati yadā na kasyacan veda, hitā nāma nādyo dvāsaptatiḥ sahasrāṇi hṛdayātpurītatamabhipratiṣṭhante, tābhiḥ pratyavasṛpya purītati śete; sa yathā kumāro vā mahārājo vā mahābrāhmaṇo vātindhīmānandasya gatvā śayīta, evamevaiṣa etacchete.

Word Meanings

atha - again; *yadā* - when; *suṣuptaḥ* - fast asleep; *bhavati* - (the Self) becomes; *yadā* - when; *kasyacan* - anything; *na* - not; *veda* - is aware of; *hita* - *hita; nāma* - called; *dvāsaptatiḥ* - seventy-two; *sahasrāṇi* - thousand; *nādyaḥ* - nerves; *hṛdayāt* - from the heart; *purītatam* - to the per-

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icardium; *abhipratiṣṭhante* - (which) branch off; *tābhiḥ* - along these; *pratyavasṛpya* - returning; *purītati* - in the body; *śete* - (and) lies, stays; *saḥ yathā* - as; *kumāraḥ* - a baby; *vā* - either; *mahārājaḥ* - a great king; *vā* - or; *mahābrāhmaṇaḥ* - a noble *brāhmaṇa; vā* - or; *ānandasya* - of bliss; *atindhīm* - the very limit; *gatva* - reaching; *śayīta* - may lie; *evam eva* - just so; *eṣaḥ* - this (self); *etat* - thus; *śete* - lies

Again, when the self becomes fast asleep - when it is not aware of anything - it returns to the body along the seventy-two thousand nerves called *hitā*, which branch off from the heart to all parts of the body, and stays in it. Just as a baby, or a great king, or a worthy *brāhmaṇa* lives, having reached the very limit of bliss, so does the self remain.

In both philosophy and psychology, alternating states of consciousness is a very important subject. A person is not the same all through the twenty-four hours of day and night. There are hundreds and thousands, nay, billions of exploding factors that go into the constitution of an embodied person. This is very beautifully explained in *Dragons of Eden* by Carl Sagan:

The information content of any message is usually described in units called bits, which is short for "binary digits." The simplest arithmetical scheme uses not ten digits (as we do because of the evolutionary accident that we have ten fingers) but only two, 0 and 1. Thus any sufficiently crisp question can be answered by a single binary digit - 0 or 1, yes or no. If the genetic code were written in a language of two letters rather than four letters, the number of bits in a DNA molecule would equal twice the number of nucleotide pairs. But since there are four different kinds of nucleotides, the number of bits of information in DNA is four times the number of nucleotide pairs. Thus if a single chromosome has five billion nucleotides, it contains twenty billion bits of information.

How much information is twenty billion bits? What would be its equivalent, if it were written down in an or-

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dinary printed book in a modern human language? Alphabetical human languages characteristically have twenty to forty letters plus one to two dozen numerals and punctuation marks; thus sixty four alternative characters should suffice for most such languages. Since 2^6 equals 64 (2x2x2x2x2x2), it should take no more than six bits to specify a given character. We can think of this being done by a sort of game of "Twenty Questions," in which each answer corresponds to the investment of a single bit to a yes/no question. . . .[O]nly six bits are required to specify a given letter. Therefore twenty billion bits are the equivalent of about three billion letters. If there are approximately six letters in an average word, the information content of a human chromosome corresponds to about five hundred million words. If a typical book contains five hundred such pages, the information content of a single human chromosome corresponds to some four thousand volumes. It is clear, then, that the sequence of rungs on our DNA ladders represents an enormous library of information. It is equally clear that so rich a library is required to specify as exquisitely constructed and intricately functioning an object as a human being. Simple organisms have less complexity and less to do, and therefore require a smaller amount of genetic information. The Viking landers that were put down on Mars in 1976 each had preprogrammed instructions in their computers amounting to a few million bits. Thus Viking had slightly more "genetic information" than a bacterium, but significantly less than an alga. [21]

What we should learn from this account is that one of the greatest wonders is that we human beings behave normally. The chaos in consciousness is held together in a kind of inner balance. For that we have two control systems, two alternating states of consciousness - waking and sleeping. Indian psychology thinks of human consciousness as having four tiers when coupled with a body, while Western psychologists like Freud think of the three tiers of the unconscious, preconscious and conscious. The four tier theory is presented in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* and the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā* of Gaudapada. Śankara, being the grand disciple of Gaudapada, subscribes to the theory of the

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surface consciousness as *Jāgrat*, dream consciousness as *svapna* and deep sleep as *suṣupti*. There is a transcendence where the consciousness is unwound so it has homogeneity and remains with the fourth, the *turīya*. In all the other *Upaniṣads*, including the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, the fourth state is not mentioned. The scheme of correlation in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* has great resemblance to the vertical-horizontal coordinates of Descartes. For the normative purpose of judging the relative and the Absolute, the x-axis and the y-axis are pressed into service. *Praṇava* or *AUM* is said to be a scheme of correlation with a vertical axis cut by a horizontal axis. The position of the horizontal is not static. If we take the vertical as a parameter, its negative pole can be marked as alpha and the positive pole as omega. All growth and changes are from alpha to omega. It is deceptive to think of the alpha as negative and the omega as positive because the omega is far removed from the transactional world. A detailed study of *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* can give us a convincing theory of the altering states of consciousness.

AUM is conceived of as a mathematical instrument to represent the totality of human experience which includes its transcendent imperiential identity with the Absolute. In the second mantra there is the great dictum "This Self is the Absolute" *(ayam ātma brahma)*. Along with that there comes the elucidation that this Self *(ātma)* is of four limbs, meaning that it has four quarters which are represented by *A, U, Ma* and silence. *A* stands for the wakeful, gross, positive transactional verity of consciousness where perception takes place. *U* stands for the virtual subtle mentations based on the evolution of concepts. There, subjectivity operates all by itself. *Ma*, as the sound indicates, is the silent womb of the mother, the alpha point from where all elaborations are manifested until they culminate in the silence of the vertical plus or omega. When Śankara interprets this mantra of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* he says that the deep sleep state is identical with the pure state of the Self. The example is quoted of an infant, who, when he sleeps, is on par with the best of all kings and the wisest of people because his consciousness is not the least disturbed.

This state is described in many *Upaniṣads*. The references are: *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* - 2.1.20, 4.3.15, 4.3.18, 4.3.19, 4.3.21, 4.3.22, 4.3.23, 4.3.32; *Chāndogya* - 4.8.1, 6.8.2, 6.9.1, 6.9.2, 6.9.3, 6.10.2, 8.3.2, 8.3.4, 8.6.3; *Praśna* - 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6,

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4.7, 4.9; *Kaṭha* - 2.3.10; *Taittirīya* 2.8.5. It is also referred to in Śankara's *Brahma Sūtra* Commentary - 1.4.18, 2.1.9 and *Yoga Vasiṣṭha - Bhāṣa Vilāsa Samvāda*. From all these references we can see how important the deep sleep state is considered to be in Indian philosophy and psychology.

In the *Philosophy of the Unconscious* of Hartmann, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, 1950) the following sections are worth studying in this context: (A) The Manifestation of the Unconscious in Bodily Life, (B) The Unconscious in the Human Mind and (C) The Metaphysics of the Unconscious. More modern research studies of the relationship between the Self and the brain can be read in *The Self and Its Brain* by Popper and Eccles. Other important books which deal with this subject are the *Embodiments of Mind* edited by McCulloch and *Psychobiology of Mind* by William Uttal which go into many interesting details of the unconscious mind.

From the beginning of our study of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we have been looking at three planes in a hierarchical order - the cosmologic, the physiologic and the nucleic origin of biochemical and bioelectrical spurting at the alpha point. To give some sort of a correlation to these factors, Descartes' mind-body dichotomy is helpful. As the scope of his scheme of correlation was confined to the static world, Kant suggested a revision of the Cartesian coordinates through a process of methodic elaboration of the epistemology of the consciousness implied in the case of human beings. It was further enhanced by Bergson who introduced the revolutionary idea of the *schema motor*. Later this led to the development of topology in mathematics followed by topological studies in psychology which unfortunately have not been followed up. Such is the vast subject dealt with by this mantra. We will have several occasions to go back to it.

Mantra 20

sa yathorṇābhistantunoccaret, yathāgreḥ kṣudrā visphuliṅgā vyuccaranti, evamevāsmādātmanaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ, sarve lokāḥ, sarve devāḥ, sarvāṇi bhutāni vyuccaranti; tasyopaniṣat - satyasya satyamiti; prāṇā vai satyam, teṣāmeṣa satyam. iti prathamam brāhmaṇam.

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Word Meanings

saḥ yathā - as; *ūrṇanābhiḥ* - a spider; *tantuna* - along the thread; *uccaret* - moves; *yathā* - as; *agneḥ* - from a fire; *kṣudrāḥ* - little; *visphuliṅgāḥ* - sparks; *vyuccarantī* - scatter; *evam eva* - just so; *asmāt ātmanaḥ* - from this Self; *sarve* - all; *prāṇāḥ* - organs; *sarve* - all; *lokāḥ* - worlds; *sarve* - all; *devāḥ* - gods; *sarvāṇi* - (and) all; *bhūtani* - beings; *vyuccarantī* - issue; *tasya* - its; *upaniṣad* - secret name; *satyasya* - of truth; *satyam* - (is) the truth; *iti; prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *vai* - verily; *satyam* - (is) truth; *eṣaḥ* - it; *teṣām* - of them; *satyam* - (is) the truth

As a spider moves along the thread (it produces), or as from a fire little sparks scatter, just so from this Self issue all organs, all worlds, all gods and all living beings. Its secret name is the truth of truth. The vital force is truth, and it is the truth of that.

In this verse some natural phenomena are given as examples of how, from a nucleic consciousness which is dormant, the entire world comes into existence all at once. This verse is specially called an *Upaniṣad* because it goes very close to the reality of this mystery to look at it. What is seen as the nucleus is only an expanding vital energy. In the case of the universe, the expansion is attributable to the fast-moving winds which alter the cosmic electromagnetic fields. The trillions of nucleotides that are distributed and stimulated, each one reacting to the other in a mysterious and profound manner, can all be seen as *prāṇa*. Therefore it is said that *prāṇa* is truth, the truth of truths. That is why this verse is called an *Upaniṣad*.

Ajātaśatru gives the example of a spider that can descend by instantly producing a thread from inside. Having gone almost to ground level, it can instinctively climb back up using the same thread, without leaving any trace. It can also stick to the thread as if in a fishing net or leave the net behind it. We do not see any accomplice working with the spider. Similarly, the creator of one's life, the manipulator of it and the actor within it are the self-same person. Another example is given: where not even a

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spark can be seen, the thermodynamics of fire suddenly become so forceful that a volume of sparks bursts out from a single point, flaring up into the atmosphere either like a fountain or as small floating bodies in the air. In this example also, there is no volitional agent creating a design out of sparks. Before the manifestation the situation is indolent, dormant, inertial and unified. Similarly, the eidetic superimposition of the Self seems to be cut off from the neuromuscular and biochemical matrix of the body in that inertial state. We do not see any evidence of a scholar's vocabulary or the power to articulate even a single sound when one is asleep. But when the person is giving an oration, words come up like sparks, each one shining separately to impress the listener with all shades of meaning. This mystery resides in the sleeping person. It is not only the subjective aspect of a person's thoughts, words and behavior which spring into being but also the entirety of the objective world to which we are exposed all through our waking experience which seems to fill time and space with the variegated and kaleidoscopic details of objects.

The rishis ask: "What is this strange phenomena that can for one moment appear to be a non-entity and the next moment be an all-filling universe with several heterogeneous and multiverse presentations of facts?" When all these are hushed into the silence of deep sleep there is no one more non-creative and inept than the sleeping soul. In that state there is no otherness. No body consciousness is there. Therefore, there are no needs like hunger. There seem to be no compulsions and no obligatory functions. The very person who was active in the wakeful state, who was never tired of articulating thoughts, now has no need for words or deeds. Has one evolved and changed into the other? No. All that we can say about it is that this is inexplicable. When a cow is standing up or lying down and sleeping, it does not become anything other than a cow. Similarly, the entity continues to be the same in both the wakeful and sleep states, even though we cannot say in which sense it is the same. No testimony subslates another testimony. They can only complement each other. In the entire world of science we reason only in terms of experiences. In this case it is as if we come to an impasse. Words fall short and reasoning goes no further.

In verse eighty-nine of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, Narayana Guru says:

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Existing in knowledge, as the being of non-being,
countless sparks arise,
causing the appearance of the world;
so, apart from knowledge there is not another thing;
thus one should know; this knowledge bestows
the state of oneness.

In his commentary on this verse, Nataraja Guru says:

Truth must be one and has to be understood as a whole rather than in piece-meal fashion. When we say that Truth shall make us free or that knowledge is power such wholesale knowledge is what is meant. Whether it is the knowledge of the Self or the Soul or the universe around us or both together, a satisfactory degree of certainty has to be present in the truth thus gained or knowledge acquired. . . .

We know that the Sun and its light are not two entities. The Sun as the source of light might be richer in its content of luminosity but both Sun and its light are easily understood as consisting of the same stuff. Knowledge which has been compared to light has two aspects, an inner subjective aspect and the outer objective manifestation of the same. . . .

The sparks of fire are the effect of the central fire from which they arise. While having the same fire implied in them, the sparks have inert coal too as their basis and moreover the fire in each spark does not last. As sparks treated collectively as rising from the central source of fire always, they could be called real, but on the other hand there is enough justification for us to treat each spark as both real and unreal. The totality of sparks, however, by being as lasting as the fire, from which they arise, must have the same status in the same way as the sun and its rays are both light. . . .

The fire and the sparks treated together comprise all that should be taken account of to give a total global or unitive vision of reality and such a view can leave nothing else as residue or remainder. When we recognize this we come upon a wholesale philosophic answer to the main problem that philosophy sets before itself. The satisfac-

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tory certitude that such a vision carries with it is the recompense in itself, for the enquiry undertaken. 22

In the context of this *Upaniṣad*, we get a comprehensive account of the universe as it was before what the scientists call the big bang and what it has since become. Thus it truly gains the status of the science of the Absolute.

Brāhmaṇa 2

Mantra 1

yo ha vai śiśum sādhānam sapratyādhānam sasthūṇam sadāmam veda sapta ha dviṣato bhrātṛvyānavaruṇaddhi. ayam vāva śiśuryo'yam madhyamaḥ prāṇaḥ, tasyedamevādhānam, idam pratyādhānam, prāṇaḥ sthūṇā, annam dāma.

Word Meanings

yaḥ ha vai - whoever; *sādhānam* - with (its) abode; *sapratyādhānam* - with special place; *sasthūṇam* - with post; *sadāmam* - with rope; *śiśum* - the calf; *veda* - knows; *sapta* - seven; *dviṣataḥ* - jealous; *bhrātṛvyān* - relatives; *avaruṇaddhi ha* - destroys; *yaḥ ayam* - this which (is); *madhyamaḥ* - in the body; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force; *ayam* - this; *vāva* - verily; *śiśuḥ* - (is) the calf; *idam* - this (body); *eva* - itself; *tasya* - (is) its; *ādhānam* - abode; *idam* - this (head); *pratyādhānam* - special place, *prāṇaḥ* - vigor (born of food and drink); *sthūṇa* - post; *annam* - food; *dāma* - tether

Whoever knows the calf with its abode, special place, post and tether, destroys his seven jealous relatives. This vital force in the body is verily the calf; this body itself is its abode, the head its special place, vigor its post, and food its tether.

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The first chapter presented the genesis of the physical world which included the entire universe, the cosmological world in which was placed the biologic world and within it the psychologic world. After being given a total account of the manifested world, we are now told of the ultimate basis of the world which has already been referred to as the truth of truths, *satyasya satya*. The *prajāpati* spoken of in the first chapter was not created by a god. Nor was it immortal. Like any other creature born in the phenomenal world, it was subjected to exhaustion, disease and death. It got over death by sacrificing itself and increasing its identity. The first chapter began with the example of a sacrificial horse. In the present chapter the place of the sacrificial horse is given to a calf.

In verse nineteen of the previous *brāhmaṇa* the calf was referred to as a child who had the high quality of transcending *samsāra*. Among the phenomenally created beings the *mahārāja* (great king) and wise *brāhmaṇa* were rated along with a baby as being the recipients of the highest bliss of the Self. In the present mantra it is said that the calf is the vital breath which gains the same blissful state because of its non-desire. In the previous chapter the vital breath was described as the savior of all the shining ones and the *prajāpati* itself. It is the only phenomenal power with the quality of detachment which is the same as the characteristic of the Self. The symbol of the calf is further elaborated by saying that the body is the abode of the calf, the head its special place, vigor its post and food its tether.

But this body is subjected to disease and death, pain and pleasure. Bodily life is a means of proliferating oneself in an embodied state and thus perpetuating the misery of *samsāra*. The *prāṇa* mainly lives in the head because it is from there it directs all the senses which, on that account, take delight in sensory pleasures. The root cause of being subjected to the misery of the phenomenal world comes as a direct result of the senses. The seven jealous relatives are considered to be the two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and the tongue. This is not the only place that the senses are considered to be enemies. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* also there is a description of the senses being turned outward instead of inward and this is given as the cause of human beings being caught in the snare of the external world, instead of pondering on the Self. It is suggested here that we do not become immortals because the *prāṇa* is angry with the distractions of the sens-

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es. So after a cycle of life in the body, the *prāṇa* lifts itself and goes away to the Absolute or the supreme source. This happens everyday almost like a rehearsal when deep sleep comes. When we are in deep sleep it is as good as if we are dead to this body. Our senses are all out of commission. The supreme joy one experiences in that state is the same as realizing *brahman*. If it is not a total merger in *brahman*, it can at least be seen as being in active contact with *brahman*, described in the *Gīta* as *brahmasparśam*. In the *Brahmānanda Vallī* of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, there is a beautiful chant which says that the happiness of a contemplative who has no desire for anything, like the vital force, has no qualitative difference from the joy of the highest Self achieved by all the beings which are hierarchically held in reverence by tradition.

Now this is an assessment of Bliss: Let it be supposed that there is a youth, a noble youth, in the prime of age, most swift and alert, perfectly whole and resolute, most vigorous and of good learning, and that to him belongs the entire earth laden with all riches. Then we have in him one measure of human joy. One hundred such units of human joy make a single unit of joy which the human genii possess. A sage full of Revelation and free from all cravings also possesses the same joy. One hundred such units of joy which the human genii possess make the joy of the heavenly genii; one hundred such units of joy which the heavenly genii possess make the joy of the Manes who inhabit the long-enduring world; one hundred such units of joy which the Manes inhabiting the long-enduring world possess make the joy of those gods who are so by birth in the *Ajāna* heaven; one hundred such units of joy which the *Ajāna*-born gods possess make the joy of those who have become gods by the force of their deeds; one hundred such units of joy which those gods who have become such by their deeds - for it also happens that a man attains to godhead by his own deeds-make the joy of the highest gods; one hundred such units of the joy of the highest gods make the joy of *Indra*; one hundred such units of *Indra's* joy make the joy of *Bṛhaspati*; one hundred such units of *Bṛhaspatis's* joy make the joy of *Prajāpati*; one hundred

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such units of *Prajāpati's* joy make the bliss of *Brahma*. A sage who is full of Revelation and free from all cravings possesses all these various measures of joy severally and progressively. And this Bliss which is in the human being and in the yonder Sun are the same. He who comprehends fully as stated above, after departing from this world, transcends the *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya*, and *ānandamaya* Selfs. 23

Mantra 2

tametāḥ saptākṣitaya upatiṣṭhante; tadyā imā akṣan lohinyo rājayastābhirenam rudro'nvāyattaḥ. atha yā akṣannāpastābhiḥ parjanyaḥ, yā kanīnakā tayādityaḥ, yatkṛṣṇam tenāgniḥ, yacchuklam tenendraḥ, adharayainnam vartanyā pṛthivyanvāyattā, dyauruttarayā; nāsyānnam kṣīyate ya evam veda

Word Meanings

etāḥ - these; *sapta* - seven; *akṣitayaḥ* - decay-preventing gods; *tam* - it; *upatiṣṭhante* - worship; *tat* - in this matter; *akṣan* - in the eye; *yāḥ* - which; *imāḥ* - these; *lohinyaḥ* - red; *rājayaḥ* - lines (are); *tābhiḥ* - through them; *rudraḥ* - *Rudra*; *enam* - to it; *anvāyattaḥ* - is subservient; *atha* - and; *akṣan* - in the eye; *yāḥ* - which; *āpaḥ* - the water (is); *tābhiḥ* - through the same; *parjanyaḥ* - *Parjanya* (the rain-god), *yā* - which; *kanīnakā* - pupil (is); *tayā* - through that; *ādityaḥ* - the sun; *yat* - which; *kṛṣṇam* - dark portion (is); *tena* - through that; *agniḥ* - fire; *yat* - which; *suklam* - the white portion (is); *tena* - through that; *indraḥ* - *Indra*; *adharayā* - lower; *vartanyā* - through the eyelid; *pṛthivī* - the earth; *enam* - it; *anvāyattā* - is subservient; *uttarayā* - through the upper eyelid; *dyauḥ* - heaven; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *asya* - his; *annam* - food; *na* - not; *kṣīyate* - is exhausted

These seven decay-preventing gods worship it: for in-

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stance, through these red lines that are in the eye *Rudra* is subservient to it; through the water that is in the eye *Parjanya*; through the pupil the sun; through the dark portion fire; through the white portion *Indra*; through the lower eyelid the earth is subservient to it; and through the upper eyelid heaven. He who knows thus never gets short of food.

The senses are generally called *akṣa* which means the axis on which the world revolves. Freud speaks of sex as the hub on which life revolves. Similarly, the senses are the hub on which the life interest revolves.

The Greek people call their characters for writing, vowels and consonants, alphabet. To coin that word they have used the first two letters, *alpha* and *beta*. In Sanskrit the word is *akṣara*. The first vowel is *a*; the first consonant is *ka* and the last two consonants are *sa* and *ha*. When you combine the three consonants they become *kṣa*. Thus the term *akṣa* covers the entire series of Sanskrit letters. As it is a delight to speak and write, *ra* (meaning joy) is also added. Further, language is to cover the names of all the forms we see. Forms are seen with the eyes. Certain forms are recognized by the ear, by touch, by taste, by smell. Therefore all the senses share the status of the eye. When a form is recognized, whether seen with the actual eye or perceived by the other four senses, it is named. The names of things are all written and spoken. Once a name can be written or spoken, it becomes an approved nomenclature in the world language. Therefore it comes to have the status of the imperishable. *Akṣara* also means the imperishable.

In the present mantra seven contributory factors are stationed in the eye to vouch for the eternity of all experiences that are transformed into nominal indestructibility. These are to be understood both physically and psychically. The outer layer of the eyeball has in it several conveyors of *prāṇa* which are mostly transparent. A few of them carry blood through capillaries. The serum that goes into the blood vessels of the eye is screened to have the minimum of white or red corpuscles. Only when the eye becomes infected is there a profuse supply of blood for therapeutic purposes. The first among gods, *Rudra*, is also the last among gods. *Rudra's* main function is to keep vigilance. As the eye is

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the main gateway into the world, the pristine purity of the soul is to be maintained by controlling what the eye sees. Therefore *Rudra* is stationed in the eye as a moral censor. The rishis also sing that one should not see anything inauspicious. Thus the first divinity that one should pay heed to in one's eyes is *Rudra*.

The eye is always to be kept clean. Even the slightest dust in it can hamper vision. If *Rudra* is the moral censor that sits in the eye, the greatest cleanser of the eye is *Parjanya*, that which easily stimulates the tear glands. The eye can wash itself into cleanliness with a weak sodium chloride solution. This represents the lord of the clouds and rain. Etymologically the word *parjanya* is connected with purgatory and purging. The eyeball is to be continuously moistened to keep its delicate constituents ever wet, always clean and ever-vigilant to look. The third divinity is the sun, *Sūrya*, *Āditya*. *Viṣṇu* or the supreme Self is said to be ever-residing in the sun, in the eye and in water. Hence he is called *Nārāyaṇa* (*naram* means water; *nārāyaṇa* means the resident of water). The *puruṣa* or the spirit dwelling in *nara* (a person) is also called *nārāyaṇa*. Hence, when *Viṣṇu* is invoked he is addressed as *akṣṇārāyaṇa* and *sūryanārāyaṇa*. *Viṣṇu* keeps up the continuity of the world by specifying memories with gestaltations. Every gestalt is a picture. The eye sees pictures. Memory is a recall of a picture. Therefore the picture-making sun is seen as being in the pupil of the eye.

What comes into the pupil is to be used to kick up the energies of the retina. That is like turning on many electrical switches of the rods and cones. Hence the divinity of the sun is said to be surrounded by the divinity *Agni*, fire, who is always honored as *jātavedas*, the eternal witness of all actions. What the eye sees is not a black and white world but a colorful one. The contributory factor in the eye that combines the electrical consolidation with a parallel chemical consolidation is a device by which the eye sees a world of seven colors used kaleidoscopically to produce seventy thousand shades of pigments. Behind these devices is the entire arrangement to carry the message into the labyrinth of the optical nerves that have to take the message through the screening and correlating process of two cortical functions, one of the eye itself, the other of the central cortex of the brain. In between, there are a volley of interactions with sensory recognition of forms supplied by the other four sense organs. Thus the associated ideas of images which are similar and dissimilar are made

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easily available for scanning so that a very vivid memory of sensory data is assured. This master technician is referred to here as *Indra*, the lord of the senses.

The lower eyelid and the upper eyelid are like two shutters from above and below. The lower eyelid is the supporting one which has the divinity of earth. The upper lid is representative of the world of the shining ones. When the upper shutter is received into the lower the person can go to sleep. When the upper eyelid, which represents the sphere of light, is freed from the reflex of automation, it allows the entire lens of the eyeball to receive the stimulus of light and shade from outside. Thus the eye is the most magnificent of all faculties which can be considered a treasury supported by seven divinities.

The experience gathered by the eye, which stands for all five senses, is the raw material out of which one's *samskāra* is formed. The impressions gathered by the eye will ultimately be condensed to become part of the incipient memories *(vāsanās)* that can be transferred from one life cycle to the next. Thus with the death of the body and eye, the essence of what has been seen in one's life does not perish. A two-way transference is allotted to this. The first transference is genetic - an indelible aspect of the DNA that is to be preserved in the chromosome which is going into the next generational member. The other is through the conveyance of the causal body which can outlive the physical cessation of the life impressions that are to be psychically preserved to begin again when an appropriate body is found through the selection of the right genes.

Those who know all these secrets do not fall short of the stamina for the perennial life that is ever in the progressive path of perfecting the soul until they become one with the Absolute. That is why it is said that the true knower of this secret is never lost in the long pilgrimage where the soul is trained to become perfect. Immanual Kant had an inkling of it when he spoke of life on earth as a training ground for the moral life to become perfect.

Mantra 3

tadeṣa śloko bhavati. arvāgbilaścamasa ūrdhvabudhnaḥ tasminyaśo nihitam viśvarūpam. tasyāsata ṛṣayaḥ sapta

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tīre vāgaṣṭamī brāhmaṇā samvidānā iti. `arvāgbilaścamasa ūrdhvabudhnaḥ' itīdam tacchiraḥ, eṣaḥ hyarvāgbilaścamasa ūrdhvabudhnaḥ; `tasminyaśo nihitam viśvarūpam' iti prāṇā vai yaśo viśvarūpam, prāṇānetadāha; `tasyāsata ṛṣayaḥ sapta tīre' iti prāṇā vā ṛṣayaḥ, prāṇānetadāha; `vāgaṣṭamī brahmaṇā samvidānā' iti vāgdhyaṣṭamī brahmaṇā samvitte

Word Meanings

tat - on this (subject); *eṣaḥ* - this; *ślokaḥ* - mantra verse; *bhavati* - there is; *arvāk-bilaḥ* - with the opening below; *ūrdhva-budhnaḥ* - bulging above; *camasaḥ* - (there is) a bowl; *tasmin* - in that; *viśvarūpam* - manifold (cause of); *yaśaḥ* - glory, knowledge; *nihitam* - has been placed; *tasya tīre* - on its side; *sapta* - seven; *ṛṣayaḥ* - sages; *āsate* - sit; *brahmaṇā* - with the mass of words; *samvidānā* - associated (with), uttering; *vāk* - the organ of speech; *aṣṭamī* - (is) the eighth; *iti*; *arvāgbilaḥ ūrdhvabudhnaḥ camasaḥ iti* - this (means); *idam* - this; *tat* - familiar; *śiraḥ* - head; *eṣaḥ* - it (is); *hi* - because; *arvāgbilaḥ ūrdhvabudhnaḥ camasaḥ; tasmin viśvarūpam yaśaḥ nihitam iti* - in this expression; *prāṇān* - to the organs; *etat* - thus; *āha* - (the mantra) refers; *prāṇāḥ* - the organs; *vai* - verily; *viśvarūpam* - (are) manifold (cause of); *yaśaḥ* - glory; *tasya tīre sapta ṛṣayaḥ āsate iti prāṇān etat āha; prāṇāḥ* - the organs; *vai* - verily; *ṛṣayaḥ* - (are) the sages; *brahmaṇā samvidānā vāk aṣṭamī iti* - this (means); *vāk* - the organ of speech; *aṣṭamī* - (is) the eighth; *brahmaṇā* - with the mass of words; *hi* - because; *samvitte* - is associated (with)

On this subject there is this mantra verse: "There is a bowl with its opening below and bulging above; in it manifold knowledge has been placed: seven sages sit by its side; and the organ of speech, which utters words, is the eighth." The "bowl with its opening below and bulging above" is this head (of ours), for it is a bowl with its opening below and bulging above. "In it manifold knowledge has been placed," refers to the organs, which verily

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represent manifold knowledge. "Seven sages sit by its side," refers to the organs, which are verily the sages. "The organ of speech, which utters words, is the eighth" - because the organ of speech, the eighth one, utters words.

In experimental science the certitude of a postulate comes from its proof. Experiments are performed to bombard the postulate with variables. If the experiments are successful the postulate is proved. In Vedānta the place of experiment is given to examples. Looking at an example and arriving at truth has an element of revelation in it. Of all valid testimony direct perception is the most convincing. Next best is comparison because a comparison can be given only by a knowledgeable person who recognizes an analogy as apt. We can accept the word testimony of the person who gives analogy but if the mere analogy does not carry conviction one can put the analogy to a test. In the present case the analogy is not far-fetched. It is a pot which is open at the top and bulges at the bottom. It is referred to as being upside down. We can easily see that the reference is to our own heads. Our necks are compared to the neck of the pot. In this modern age we could have compared the head to an engine that is encased in the front of a car. All the means of acquiring knowledge are fitted into this unusual pot.

What is stored in the head is mainly the memory of everything we have experienced. It can be classified as the memory of everything we have heard throughout our lives which probably began with the words of endearment we heard from our mothers' lips. For about twenty-five years we were compulsively kept in classrooms just to listen to the instructions the teachers were trying to give us. Almost from the very outset the teachers were very particular that we should learn to write what we heard. Hearing was simultaneously coupled with what we were seeing. Two other organs of sensuous perception are connected with the direct enjoyment of life, tasting and smelling. Along with that two other functions also take place. One is breathing in and out through the nostrils. The other is articulation. Thinking is a silent way of articulating. Although we don't have to use the tongue with its full motor force, there is a dormant movement in the tongue even when we think silently. People who are less sophisticated and

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less trained can think only by speaking out their thoughts.

Our acquisition of knowledge comes through seven allegoric seers: the two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and the tongue. The tongue is said to be not only a seer but also one who communicates with the Self. Whether the source from which we get information is that of hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, or tasting, it is all to be rendered into utterable terms so that the person in us can silently communicate with the oversoul or overseeing scheme of life with which we have to participate, all through wakeful life and dream life. The allegoric significance of these faculties is going to be elucidated in the next mantra.

Mantra 4

imāveva gotamabharadvājau, ayameva gotamaḥ, ayam bharadvājaḥ; imāveva viśvāmitrajamadagni, ayameva viśvāmitraḥ, ayam gamadagnīḥ; imāveva vasiṣṭhakaśyapau, ayameva vasiṣṭhaḥ, ayam kaśyapaḥ; vāgevātriḥ, vācā hyannamadyate, attirha vai namaitadyadatririti; sarvasyāttā bhavati, sarvamasyānnam bhavati ya evam veda. iti dvitīyam brāhmaṇam

Word Meanings

imau - these two (ears); *eva* - indeed; *gotam-bharadvājau* - (are) Gotama and Bharadvāja; *ayam* - this; *eva* - indeed; *gotamaḥ* - (is) Gotama; *ayam* - this; *bharadvājaḥ* - (is) Bharadvāja; *imau* - these two (eyes); eva - indeed; *viśvāmitra-jamadagni* - (are) Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni; *ayam* this; *eva* - indeed; *viśvāmitraḥ* - (is) Viśvāmitra; *ayam* i this; *jamadagniḥ* - (is) Jamadagni; *imau* - these two (nostrils); *eva* -indeed; *vasiṣṭha-kaśyapau* - Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa; *ayam* - this; *eva* - indeed; *vasiṣṭhaḥ* - (is) Vasiṣṭha; *ayam* - this; *kaśyapaḥ* - (is) Kaśyapa; *vāk* - the tongue; *eva* - indeed; *atriḥ* - (is) Atri; *vācā* - through the tongue; *hi* - for; *annam* - food; *adyate* - is eaten; *yat* - which; *atriḥ* - (is) Atri; *iti etat* - this; *attiḥ* - (is) Atti; *ha vai* - indeed; *nāma* - the name; *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *sarvasya* - of all (food); *attā* - the eater; *bhavati* -

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(he) becomes; *sarvam* - everything; *asya* - one's; *annam* - food; *bhavati* - becomes

These two (ears) are indeed Gotama and Bharadvāja: this is Gotama, and this Bharadvāja. These two (eyes) are indeed Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni: this one is Viśvāmitra, and this one Jamadagni. These two (nostrils) are indeed Vasiṣṭha and Kāśyapa: this one is Vasiṣṭha, and this one Kaśyapa. The tongue is indeed Atri, for through it food is eaten. "Atri" is only the familiar name "Atti." One who knows thus becomes the eater of all food, and everything becomes one's food.

If we draw a line vertically in time from where we sit it will culminate in the beyond *(param)*. The beyond is what is beyond even sky. The *veda* is considered to be beyond everything else. Hence it represents *param*. Where we sit is the here and now *(iham)*. The parameter we are postulating connects the here and now to the beyond and the beginning. In the absolute Being, if a beginning is to be postulated, it should be the beginning of a vibration. The vibratory quality of ether is sound. The *veda* is what is heard *(śruti)*. The *śrotra*, or ear, is in us. It is with this ear here and now that we hear what has come from the beyond.

Therefore the two rishis with whom we are connected to be initiated into the *Vedas* are Gotama and Bharadvāja. According to legends, Gotama is the son of Rahūgaṇa. Gotama is referred to in the *Ṛg Veda:* I.13.74, I.11.58, I.14.86-87 and I.17.116. The *Veda* is not supposed to have originated from any particular rishi. It is said to be *apauruṣeya*, not originating from any *puruṣa*. Yet if it is to be heard it should be sung by a worthy person to whom it is revealed. It is believed that these portions of the *Ṛg Veda* were revealed to Gotama. We sit here as seekers of *brahmavidyā* and this hoary wisdom comes to us as revealed to Gotama and Bharadvāja. We are not left in the lurch; we are bona fide recipients of the highest wisdom sung by these two ancient rishis. The name Bharadvāja is given the following meanings in the *Bhagavata: bhare' sutān* - "I protect even those who are not my children;" *bhare śiṣyān* - "I protect my disciples;" *bhare ca bhāryām* - "I protect my wife;" *avyājād* - "I do all this with great ease;" *bharadvājo'asmi śobhane* - "therefore I am called *bha-*

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radvāja." There is a distinction between the attitudes of Gotama and Bharadvāja. Gotama represents the truthful and Bharadvāja represents the phenomenal. There is no evidence that the Indian logical system has come from the Vedic Gotama but the authorship of the *Nyāya* or Logical Aphorisms is attributed to Gautama. The similarity in the two names is striking. Bharadvāja, on the other hand, is very well known for his magical powers. The psychic potencies of Bharadvāja are described in the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhya Kāṇḍa,* ninety-first *Sarga.*

Then we come to the two eyes described here as represented by Jamadagni and Viśvāmitra. The genealogy of Jamadagni is as follows: from Viṣṇu was born Brahma; his son was Bhṛgu whose son was Cyavana whose son was Ūrva whose son was Ṛcīka whose son was Jamadagni. There is a legendary story about the birth of Jamadagni. King Gādhi had a daughter called Satyavatī who was married to Ṛcīka. One day she prayed to her husband that she and her mother would be blessed with a son each. Accordingly, Ṛcīka gave her two plates of food. One was to produce a child of *brāhmaṇa* glory and the other a child with *kṣatriya* glory. Although Ṛcīka instructed Satyavatī to eat the food blessed with *brāhmaṇa* glory, she gave that to her mother and ate the other one instead. Both Satyavatī and her mother gave birth at the same time. Satyavatī's child was called Jamadagni and her mother's child was called Viśvāmitra. In the course of time, Jamadagni, although born as a *brāhmaṇa,* showed the attitudes of a *kṣatriya,* and Viśvāmitra, born as a *kṣatriya,* showed the attitudes of a *brahmana.* This story is very significant. Our two eyes are represented by these two rishis. Even when we are directed to take the path of spirituality, by some compulsion we lose the track and go in the path of the world. Or, even when we are exposed to adverse situations, discrimination prevails upon us and we choose to walk the difficult path to achieve spiritual fulfillment. These contradictions in life are very well symbolized here.

Now we come to our two nostrils *(iḍā* and *piṅgala),* represented by Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa. Vasiṣṭha is said to have had three births. His first birth was as the breath of the creator Brahma. Thus he is identified with our vital breath. His consort was Arundhatī, whose name was also Ūrjā, meaning energy. Ūrjā, in her earlier life, was Sandhya, the personification of an emotional mood of Brahma. It is said that by her prayer the creator agreed

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to keep beings innocent during their infancy and childhood. These legendary stories of Vasiṣṭha explain many psychic phenomena. Vital breath *(prāṇa)* is free of all attachments and erotics - it is pure. In the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* there is a reference to Marīci, literally, the mirage. Brahma, the creator, had six mind-born children: Marīci, Aṅgiras, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu. From Marīci was born Kaśyapa and from Kaśyapa came every species of living beings in the phenomenal world. This story makes all sentient beings the children of the same father. Thus a living being is bound to love all other living beings. Like Marīci, Atri is also a son of Brahma. When we eat, our food is changed into nourishment by our *prāṇa*. Thus the Self and its manifestation are linked through the name Atri which otherwise means "the eater." Aṅgiras, another son of Brahma, is not mentioned in this mantra, but Atri and Aṅgiras are often bracketed.

With all these legendary references to the seven rishis we are led to the mythical background of our lives. Modern writers like Camus and Kafka give great credence to the hidden myths of human life. C.G. Jung has developed myth as an aspect of depth psychology and traditional psychology. Freud also said that a person who chops oneself off from one's unconscious depth becomes alienated from one's own spirit. This mantra gives us a reunion with the traditional past of humanity, although a mere recitation does not reveal its great depth.

Brāhmaṇa 3

Mantra 1

dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe - mūrtam caivāmūrtam ca, martyam cāmṛtam ca, sthitam ca yacca, sacca tyacca.

Word Meanings

brahmaṇaḥ - of *brahman*; *dve* - two; *vāva* - only; *rūpe* - forms (there are); *mūrtam ca* - gross; *amūrtam* - subtle;

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ca - and; *martyam ca* - mortal; *amṛtam* - immortal; *ca* - and; *sthitam ca* - limited; *yat* - unlimited; *ca* - and; *sat ca* - perceptible; *tyat* - imperceptible; *ca* - and

Brahman has only two forms - gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, perceptible and imperceptible.

Our life on earth can be considered either incidental or purposive. If it is incidental there is nothing to ponder over. In a certain sense a wind blowing, the branch of a tree swaying, a dry leaf on it becoming detached and falling and the wind carrying the dry leaf across a field are all incidents. There is nothing significant in these matters of no consequence. But human beings have developed a certain attitude, especially through living with others and transacting certain purposeful behaviors with them. Therefore, almost all people, at least in their wakeful life, think that life has a purpose. Of course, many people are at a loss to know precisely why they have been born and what they are expected to do in their wakeful hours.

A person has two kinds of lives to live simultaneously. One is to live from moment to moment on given occasions so that short-term programs can be begun and ended with the achievement of certain results. Most people have not only to perform such tasks but also are obliged to perform them to the satisfaction of another whose bid they are carrying out. The non-performance of a task can therefore be a moral failure for which one may even be punished. If it is a self-assigned task, failure can still bring a sense of guilt or shame. This is not an occasional event. It is a recurring incident with a certain amount of implied imperativeness. One's attitudes in life, moral integrity, and relationships with others are all squarely sitting on the honest and successful performance of one's tasks. If there are consecutive failures, that will have an adverse effect on one's character and satisfaction in life. So the wakeful experience of a person is a fit subject to be evaluated day after day. In dream life similar obligations and encounters are present but their consequences are not binding when the person wakes up. That means what was temporarily valid as a transaction in the dream becomes unreal after waking up. Therefore the guilt or shame of any failure is transient.

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Life generally continues over a period of seventy to eighty years, each day of which has a transactional purport. In some sense each day's program telescopes into the next day's program and there is a long-term program which runs through months and years. One's life has to consistently support a life-long motivation. Thus experiences which lie forgotten in the past have to be reconsidered as retrospectively contributing to the general flow of the mainstream of life. That means one has not only to account for simple incidents of each day but also for one's philosophy of life and style of life. Consistent behavior all through one's life is to be accounted for to one's own conscience or, in the case of a religious believer, to the ultimate judgement of the God or belief to which the faithful person is beholden. Thus we have to hold in our minds what is true in the here and now, referred to in this mantra as *yat ca*, as well as the cumulative value of everything we can recollect as having once seen, termed in this mantra as *sat ca*. One cannot remember everything one has done or said or gone through. Besides one's knowledge there are many more truths that only the Unknown or God knows, termed here as *tat ca*.

We are in a situation where simple perception or a linear vision of life is inadequate. In modern mathematics and in psychology a new way of looking at multi-faceted activity has been arrived at by combining more than one criteria for a normative notion. For instance, the axis on which the earth rotates is at a certain angle which is different from the axis on which Neptune rotates. They orbit the sun on different routes and at different velocities. If a spaceship is propelled from earth to Neptune to send a photograph to the ground station on earth, they are to be interconnected using the light of the sun, but the ordinary devices of plane geometry have little relevance. A topological scheme is to be adopted. That is why symbolic logic has now been introduced into mathematics. Similarly, to incorporate the meaning of a long-term motivation, the significance of short-term motivations and the carrying out of tasks in varying social milieus infested with unusual social values, topological criteria are to be employed in which a new kind of logic is to be adopted. Instead of using symbolic logic, the Vedantins have made a device of judging a superimposition in contrast to a valid ground of knowledge. They draw a distinction between the ground and its superimposition. The negation of the superimposition is called

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apavāda and the superimposition itself is called *adhyāropa*. Consequently certain admissions are tentatively accepted as real and later rejected as unreal. Here the terms superimposition, sublation and the assertion of the unreal are all held to be epistemologically valid. Therefore, in higher philosophy such as in *brahmavidyā*, ordinary logic is not admissible. In the course of this *Upaniṣad* we will find that the arguments of several erudite philosophers, after being stated, are judged to be only partially valid and are therefore labeled one-footed logic.

This *brāhmaṇa* prepares us to enter into a training in the typical Vedantic methodology called *anvaya vyatireka* meaning "the irrelevant is to be screened off and the relevant to be admitted as relativistically true although in its ultimate analysis, it cannot be admitted as wholly true." This aspect of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* brings the famous argument of "not this, not this" into its judgement of varying truths. As we progress we will become familiar with this methodology which is the counterpart of the theory of assertion given in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which declares that "this and this and this are that."

Mantra 2

tadetanmūrtam yadanyadvāyoścāntarikṣācca; etanmartyam, etatsthitam, etatsat; tasyaitasya mūrtasya, etasya martasya, etasya sthitasya, etasya sata eṣa raso ya eṣa tapati, sato hyeṣa rasaḥ.

Word Meanings

yat - which; *vāyoḥ ca* - than air; *antarikṣāt* - than space; *ca* - and; *anyat* - (is) other; *tat* - that; *etat* - (is) this; *mūrtam* - gross; *etat* - it; *martyam* - (is) mortal; *etat* it; *sthitam* - (is) limited; *etat* - it; *sat* - (is) perceptible; *tasya* - that above-mentioned; *etasya* - this; *mūrtasya* - of gross; *etasya martyasya* - of this mortal; *etasya sthitasya* - of this limited; *etasya sataḥ* - of this perceptible (form); *rasaḥ* - the essence; *eṣaḥ* - (is) this - *yaḥ* - which; *eṣaḥ* - this (sun); *tapati* - shines; *eṣaḥ* - it; *hi* - for; *sataḥ* - of the (above) three elements; *rasaḥ* - (is) the essence

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The gross form is that which is other than air and space. It is mortal, it is limited, and it is perceptible. The essence of that form which is gross, mortal, limited and perceptible is the shining sun, for it is the essence of those three elements.

The purpose of the study of this science is to regulate our expectations with regard to the details of its several parts and to enable us to plan our lives without running into misunderstandings and miscalculations. For that, the first division we are asked to recognize in *brahman* is the discrimination between the eternal and the fleeting. In the *Brahma Sūtrās*, the very first aphorism says: *atha'to brahmajijñāsa* - "Now, therefore, the inquiry into b*rahman*." Here there are two intriguing words, "now" and "therefore." "Now" marks a certain period in time. Whatever has immediate relevance in time is called "now." When we say "now," it automatically refers to the present situation, i.e., "here." Such a reference should mean something happened before the present moment or "now." Śankara says, "Only a person who has acquired a qualification to make an enquiry into the Absolute can specifically refer to 'now'." According to Śankara, four qualifications are required to enter into the study of *brahman:*

1. The aspirant should have acquired an ability to distinguish between the eternal *(nitya)* and the fleeting *(anitya).*

2. The second qualification is that the seeker has cultivated the disciplines of outer poise *(sama),* inner restraint *(dama),* total dedication to one's immediate assignment *(uparati),* preparedness to put up with all pains and obstacles in the path of one's search *(titikṣa),* having implicit faith *(śraddha)* in the validity of one's teacher's words and the testimony of scriptures, i.e., Science of the Absolute, and an equipoise gained from the balancing between the compulsions of dualities *(samadana).*

3. The third virtue to achieve is having no desire to get an award for one's search, either in the here or the hereafter.

4. The fourth is a will to achieve total emancipation from all forms of relativism and prejudice which is recognized as *mokṣa*

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or liberation.

Now we have come to a position where we have to check these four pre-requisites in ourselves because we are going to tread in the path of *brahmavidyā*. When we make our first observation of the situation in which we are placed in the here and now, we notice that we are stationed on earth, supported by the physical ground on which we stand, surrounded by water, and exposed to heat and cold. Apart from this we are also aware of the sky above and invisible winds blowing around. We put space and the atmosphere together as what is above and fire, water and earth as what is below. Of these five, which are *nitya* and which are *anitya*? The answer comes: that which does not belong to space and air is limited. Space and air are also in other parts of the universe. So the first discrimination of the eternal from the non-eternal is made on the basis of what is gross *(sthūla)* and what is subtle *(sūkṣma)*. The other features of the gross are that it can be divided into parts, which the subtle cannot. Air should not be mistaken for gases which are mixed up with air. Another aspect of the gross is that it is subject to transformation. It can increase or decrease in quantity, even to the point of extinction. It can occupy a large space or be compressed into a small space. It has a limited time span of existence; hence it is mortal.

Why should we know all these details? Because the problems of living beings are connected with the spatial extension they require, the parts with which they are conjoined, and the periods for which they can survive. There are small living beings who are born in one moment and are dead in the next. Fortunately, they do no worry about their short lives. Human beings are said to last for a hundred years but during that hundred years we fall in love with life and everything given to us. We do not want to die and we do not want anything or anyone connected with us to vanish or die. This is our greatest problem. We are terrified at the prospect of being dead. Although human beings do not live for more than about a hundred years, for thousands of years humanity has been pining for immortality. Our wise seers want to warn us that this is foolish. The mortality of the definable, limited and perceptible can't be extended. Death is inevitable. Wisdom is in accepting the inevitable. Hence at the very outset of the study of *brahmavidyā* we are given very clear

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instructions as to what can be expected in this world and what should not be expected. If we transgress these instructions we will come to regret. Science is to help us to avoid the folly of putting our trust in nonsense.

A question arises. If death is inevitable and there is no other reality than death why should we bother about the Absolute at all? Such a question can come only from one who has not understood the lessons given so far. We are not only in the mortal world. We also share with the Absolute certain aspects of its immortality. What is immortal? The non-perceptible is immortal, air is immortal, *ākāśa* is immortal. We are not just our gross bodies. Within the body we experience the spirit which is of the nature of knowledge. From breath we have come and to breath we return. Breath has neither birth nor death. Similarly the *ākāśa* out of which manifestations have come and into which manifestations disappear is not mortal. Only three-fifths of our manifested aspect is bound to die. Two-fifths of it can continue in its own true nature. So there is scope for immortality within the scheme in which mortality is also a passing phase.

It is necessary to know what is mortal and what is immortal in us. The mortal is this passing world of physical morbidity. It includes the earth element, water element and fire element. Even though the sun, which is many times greater than our earth, is brilliantly shining in the firmament, it has a gross body. It is limited in its girth, though vast. Like any of us, the sun will die. In the scheme of death we are not alone. All embodied beings are there. If we seek immortality it should be in a scheme where bodily extension, periods of time with beginnings and ends, and the physicality of bodies which can be objectified have no significance.

This clearly marks before us what is to be taken tentatively for the convenience of our short term programs in the body and what is essential to know as belonging to the eternal scheme of immortality. In such a short mantra we are given the most incredible teaching to avoid all the follies of life and to live in simple truth.

Mantra 3

athāmūrtam - vāyuścāntarikṣam ca; etadamṛtam, etad-

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yat, etattyat; tasyaitasyāmūrtasya, etasyāmṛtasya, etasya yataḥ, etasya tyasyaiṣa raso ya eṣa etasminmaṇḍale puruṣaḥ, tyasya hyeṣa rasaḥ - ityadhidaivatam

Word Meanings

atha - now; *amūrtam* - the subtle; vāyuḥ ca - *air; antarikṣam* - space; *ca* - and; *etat* - it; *amṛtam* - (is) immortal; *etat* - it; *yat* - (is) unlimited; *etat* - it; *tyat* - (is) imperceptible; *tasya* - that, above mentioned; *etasya* - this; *amūrtasya* - of subtle (form); *etasya amṛtasya* - of this immortal; *etasya yataḥ* - of this unlimited; *etasya tyasya* - of this imperceptible (form); *rasaḥ* - essence; *eṣaḥ* - (is) this; *yaḥ* - *which; eṣaḥ* - this; *etasmin maṇḍale* - in this solar orb; *puruṣaḥ* - (is) the principle; *eṣaḥ* - this; *hi* - because; *tyasya* - of the (above) two elements; *rasaḥ* - (is) the essence; *iti adhidaivatam* - this (is) with reference to the deities

Now the subtle form - it is air and space. It is immortal, it is unlimited, it is imperceptible. The essence of that form which is subtle, immortal, unlimited and imperceptible is the principle that is in the solar orb, for it is the essence of those two elements. This is with reference to the deities.

It was Lucipus in Greece and Kaṇāda in India who discovered that the basic constituent of the physical world is the atom. Both of them agreed that the atom is the ground of truth and the irrefutable, undeniable fact on which the fiction of the world is generating its continuous appearance of phenomenality. The untruth of the physical form does not affect the truth of the ground of things. In Sanskrit that which comes first and is followed thereafter by many like events or things is called *puruṣa*. We have our physical eyes which see the illuminations of things. We have the eye of the spirit which sees the meaning or significance of what is experienced by our senses or is illuminated by light. What is seen by the physical eye will disappear as soon as our gaze is shifted away from the object of vision or the object moves to an-

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other location. At the very beginning of the *Upaniṣad* a term was introduced to account for the continuity and contiguity of the world of appearance. It is appearance that is pictured by the mind. A name is given to that picture as an appellation, a nomenclature with which to recognize the form again and again. This recurring aspect gives the idea of the constant, the consistent, the unbreaking, the perennial, the eternal. Thus it is a paradox that we presume the perennial by looking at the transient, passing shadow. The term coined by the rishi to account for the contiguity of the hidden truth is *hiraṇyagarbha. Garbha* is the essence that hides as a repository.

This world is a *hiraṇyagarbha* because it hides many values under its crust. If we sow seeds and then water and manure them, with the help of solar energy, plants will grow. In a few months we will get bountiful crops of rice, wheat or corn. We can plant fruit trees and then, season after season, pick delicious fruits. In our gardens we can have flower bushes of all shades, colors, fragrances and honey. In the spring season they will all be laden with flowers. Every child comes as a surprise, first hiding himself or herself from public gaze for eight or nine months, then coming out as a fully equipped human being with the necessary physical limbs, sense organs, organs of action, mind and intellect, capable of giving encounter to all around with the luxury of its emotional choices. This most fantastic festival of animation manifests in bodies which are otherwise inertial, gross and fixed in form, which come into existence and then become extinct after some time. Thus in all appearances, there is a precious hidden reality.

This whole world is a manifestation of the *hiraṇyagarbha. Hiraṇyagarbha* literally means that which is golden or silvery with a fascinating shimmer in it. We are so active in the daytime because everything we see, hear, touch, taste, smell and recall as an image of the past or project as an imagination of the future has an inner glow of a corresponding value as if each one is a pearl of precious worth. We struggle to reach it, to gain it, to possess it and never to leave it. It is that struggle that essentially makes our lives worth living. It does not matter how many times we have seen a rainbow before; when it comes again it is fresh, it is new, it is admirable.

When a woman gives birth to a child who was in her womb (*garbha*) its appearance is like a revelation. No mother can turn

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away from the twinkle in her child's eye, the twist and twirl of the child's lips, the shades of emotion that lurk between a hilarious laugh and a tearful cry. All these are wonderful visions for a mother to see. What is not a golden pregnancy in this world? The kittens playing on the porch, the little puppies that bark, jump on us and lick, the buds that are struggling to unfurl, the cloud that is about to burst into rain, the lightning that flashes across a dark sky, the surprising word about to emerge from the tip of a poet's pen, the stroke of pigment which initiates a panorama of beauty on the artist's canvas, a touch of the musician on the key of the piano or on the string of a harp or guitar. Nothing is more overwhelmingly universal than the hidden glow that makes each passing moment a festival of wonder.

What does *hiraṇyagarbha* consist of? Only two things - a space to occur and the vital energy to bring you right there as the essential witness just at the moment of the birth of wonder. In Sanskrit, taking a breath is called *preśvāsa* and putting your faith in anything is called *viśvāsa*. *Preśvāsa* means to breathe properly. *Viśvāsa* is to animate your breath with a specific trust. For millions of people, the Buddha is the symbol of *viśvāsa*. To several other millions, Christ is the symbol of *viśvāsa*. In India, millions have faith in the flute-bearer, Kṛṣṇa, or the god of dances, Śiva. There is no end to the variegations of *hiraṇyagarbha* and yet basically it is the one golden thread of life that passes through every animated being and even every inanimate thing. The dewdrop glistening in the morning sun is as precious as the pearl that is studded in the emperor's crown or the bewitching smile that one hungers after on his or her beloved's loveful lips.

The sun out there in the firmament that we see is only a mass of fire that may be extinguished tomorrow. But the meaning of this colorful, musical world where millions of stars shimmer and galaxies swirl is caused by the never-ceasing winds that blow. All the galaxies that we know fill only a little space. Certainly, space and cosmic winds are the two worthy ingredients for the ever-manifesting wonder of *hiraṇyagarbha*. Some people fool themselves by counting only what is here and now in the palms of their hands. Their poverty-stricken minds forget that several times in the past they were holding similar gifts. They are miserable creatures if they cannot foresee that tomorrow and the day after tomorrow and the day after, they will be given new gifts to hold and new food to eat. That is why Jesus said you should not

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be anxious about what you will eat tomorrow or what you will wear tomorrow. This universal game of the unknown has in it a known that keeps us alive and hopeful for tomorrow. Such is the promise of this mantra.

Mantra 4

athādhyātmam - idameva mūrtam yadanyatprāṇācca, yaścāyamantarātmannākāśaḥ; etanmartyam, etatstitam, etatsat; tasyaitasya mūrtasya, etasya martasya, etasya sthitasya, etasya sata eṣa raso yaccakṣuḥ, sato hyeṣa rasaḥ.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *adhyātmam* - with reference to the body; *mūrtam* - the gross (form); *idam* - (is) this; *eva* - verily; *yat* - which; *prāṇāt ca* - than the (corporeal) air; *yaḥ* - which (is); *ca* - and; *ayam* - this; *antarātman* - in the body; *ākāśaḥ* - ether; *(tasmāt* - than that); *anyat* (is) other; *yat* - which; *cakṣuḥ*- (is) the eye; (Rest as in mantra two.)

Now with reference to the body: the gross form is verily this - what is other than (the corporeal) air and the space that is in the body. It is mortal, it is limited, it is perceptible. The essence of that form which is gross, mortal, limited and perceptible is the eye, for it is the essence of those three elements.

In the physical self there are perceptible and imperceptible, gross and subtle aspects, limited and fixed body forms. First the question is: "What are the perceivable aspects; what is gross?" To answer, we exclude the breath and space and consider the three elements of the corporeal body. What is incorporated into that body will one day be disjoined. Hence it is mortal. This has been explained in the previous mantras. Whether mortal or immortal, gross or subtle, we see significance in everything because of a

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certain power in us to organize things into conceivable forms. Essentially this is done by the power to perceive. The main organ of perception is the eye. Thus in the consideration of the physical self the first thing that comes to our attention is the orientation that is established by the eye. It is that orientation which links the body with the Self.

We have seen that the essence of the elemental world is illuminated by the sun in the firmament. In the previous mantra that essence was attributed to the *hiraṇyagarbha* who is in the sun as a *puruṣa* or spirit. Apart from their relationship with the spirit in the sun, the perceivables would be insignificant. They are significant because through that relationship these illuminated things share the essence of the hidden source of the happiness of the Self. All the primordial functions which have led to the formation of the world and the reciprocal appreciation of that world by the perceiving eye, make the perceiving spirit the essence of all. The essence of the fire is that it can consume. Where there is essence there is consumption. The world is consumed by the seer.

The act of seeing has two main aspects. One has been elaborately studied by physical and natural scientists as the science of optics and the physiology of the organ of perception which utilizes the physical energy of light to see things. Then we have a more secretive inner region to look into - the elaborate system of neural conveyance through which a life-long investigation is going on to discern what is to be appreciated, how and why it is to be appreciated and the inside story of every act of appreciation. Many volumes have already been written by physicists, biologists, physiologists, ophthalmologists, biochemists, embryologists and brain specialists on the theme of vision. For the time being we shall leave all these elaborate studies to those who want to know the structure and function of the eye. We shall ask a more spiritually significant question: "In the long history of the evolution of meaningful life, at what stage did it become incumbent for there to be a field brought into the purview of sight and how was the seer conceived for the first time to occupy the arena of vision? In the *Bhagavad Gīta* these two aspects are respectively called *kṣetra* (the field) and *kṣetrajña* (the knower of the field).

If we look into the millions of species that have come to occupy this corporeal world of fire, water and earth, we can see that for natural conveniences the world is divided into many areas of

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interests. Although there is overlapping in the area claimed by different species for their habitation, on knowing a species, we more or less know the area it prefers to occupy as its field. Leaving several millions of species as outsiders, we can confine our interest to the limited field of human habitation. Just as different people have distinctive patterns of finger prints, different individuals choose distinctive operational fields. Let us take just three typical cases of people who look for similar instrumentation to occupy themselves in their varied fields of interest: a surgeon, a butcher and a sculptor or woodworker. Each one of these three people find that a knife in their hand is the most efficient instrument to carry out the intrinsic interest of their life, their *svadharma*. The butcher specializes in using his knife to kill an animal with least pain, saving most of its blood. He acts as a benefactor of meat-eating people, making a distribution of the neatly cut out flesh of a healthy animal to the satisfaction of his customers. The surgeon's motivation is not to kill but to save a fellow human being with the deft handling of a scalpel. He tries to neatly remove only the affected part of the body to give, if possible, a long lease of life to his fellow human. If he performs a successful operation, a diseased body can be reclaimed to normal functioning. The sculptor or wood worker who is moved by his aesthetic spirit sees the very spirit of beauty lying dormant in a piece of stone or wood. He wants to bring it to the surface where millions who are not trained in beholding the latent beauty can see it. The group he wants to benefit includes many from the coming generations because he wants to immortalize the otherwise mortal factors with which he works.

In all three cases - the surgeon, the butcher and the artist - they each have to use their eyes. Their eyes give instructions to their hands. If the eye represents knowledge, the hand represents *karma* (action). The theme is the coming together of the two great spheres of life - knowledge, which belongs to the spirit, and action, which belongs to the corporeal world. There has to be the seer to transform the field or world which he or she sees. This has been happening through millennia - the interaction between the mortal and immortal, the essential and factual, the dormant and the obvious, and perceiver and the perceived. It is worthwhile to study the physics, physiology, neurology, biochemistry and the psychology of visual thinking to get an idea of what a fantastic world the eye represents to this phenomenal world of

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manifestation. For that we should begin with the first accounts given by the embryologists which tell how, before all limbs are manufactured and put together, the embryo banks upon the need to have the eyeballs so sculptured that the nearest and the farthest can all be brought to a single camera which closely knits all possible elements of sight.

Everywhere we see that space and vital breath or air provide for the larger field of interest and possibility in which the three perishable substances are fashioned into immediate and pragmatic devices of experiencing. These devices have to act in all the countless millions of relationships we establish with our internal spirit and external world through the liaisons of the temporary offices of organisms. We have taken only three typical examples. They can be multiplied into three hundred million examples.

The elaborate care given to it by the architect of the eye can be mind-blowing. First of all the phenomena that is contracted as the major instrument for this adventure is light that travels through air at a speed of 300,000 kilometers per second. It is surprising that the rishi knew that air is the most suitable medium for light to travel in because its refractive index is only 1.00. On one side is the sun which is many times bigger than the earth and on the other side is the tiny eye. What directs this great device is just the individual's need. Our eyes, which are made of mortal stuff, are certainly exposed to several errors and aberrations. Yet the help they give for arriving at judgements provides a perfect response to the need to ascertain the meaning of one's life. The anatomy and function of the structural elements of the retina are in perfect resonance with an orderly way of generating a world of structure in which each layer is in perfect resonance with the rest. The functional components of the retina arranged in layers from the outside to the inside are as follows: 1) pigment layer, 2) layer of rods and cones projecting into the pigment, 3) outer lining membrane, 4) outer nuclear layer, 5) outer plexiform layer, 6) inner nuclear layer, 7) inner plexiform layer, 8) ganglionic layer, 9) layer of optic nerve fibers, and 10) inner limiting membrane.

The inside story of the rhodopsin, retinal visual cycle and excitation of the rods is an alarming and frightening story. The exact way in which rhodopsin decomposition excites the rod is still speculative. We can see the candle burning away as it gives light. We are told that the sun is burning out as it gives us its radia-

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tion. It is surprising that with all the perseverance with which we look, our eyes do not burn out in a few days. It is said the retinal portion of the rhodopsin is a photo-synthetic compound that becomes activated in the presence of light.

> The initial effect of the light is to cause photoexitation of electrons in the retinal molecule, raising these electrons to higher energy states. During this excited state, the internal physical structure (but not yet its chemical structure) begins to change, and the ultimate effect is conversion of the 11-*cis*-retinal into all-*trans*-retinal. All this occurs within nanoseconds or microseconds, and at the same time the retinal portion of the rhodospsin molecule undergoes a conformational change, from an angulated molecular structure of the *cis* form to a straight molecular structure of the *trans* form. Then, in rapid succession, the rhodopsin decomposes chemically through the several stages of decomposition products as described above. 24

The cones in the retina are responsible for color vision. There are three different types of photo-chemicals present in different cones, thus making them selectively sensitive to the different colors, blue, green and red. The three sensitive pigments, blue, green and red, have three different peak absorbancies at light wavelengths, respectively, of 430, 535, 575 millimicrons. Each retina contains about 125 million rods and 5.5 million cones; yet as counted with the light microscope only 900,000 optic nerve fibers lead from the retina to the brain.

It is surprising that we are carrying with us such a elaborate instrument carefully instituted in us by the author of our lives. Yet we do not have the normal anxiety we should have to preserve this gift from being hampered. Instead we are distracted, thinking of the five grams of gold kept in the vault of the State Bank. What we have read in the previous mantra put together with the present one will show us that all the "Hallelujah's" we say, "Praise the Lord's" we mumble and "Amazing Grace's" we sing cannot do adequate justice to the Providence that takes such good care of us.

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Mantra 5

athāmūrttam--prāṇaśca yaścāyamantarātmannākāśaḥ; etadamṛtam, etadyat, etattyat; tasyaitasyāmūrtasya, etasyāmṛtasya etasya yaiaḥ, etasya tyasyaiṣa raso yo'yam dakṣiṇe'kṣanpuruṣaḥ, tyasya hyeṣa rasaḥ

Word Meanings

atha - now; *amūrtam* - the subtle (form); *prāṇaḥ ca* - the (corporeal) air; *yaḥ* - which; *ca* - and; *ayam* - (is) this; *antarātman* - in the body; *ākāśaḥ* - space; *yaḥ* - which (is); *ayam* - this; *dakṣiṇe akṣan* - in the right eye; *puruṣaḥ* - principle; (Rest as in verse three.)

Now the subtle form - it is (the corporeal) air and the space that is in the body. It is immortal, it is unlimited, it is imperceptible. The essence of that form which is subtle, immortal, unlimited, and imperceptible is this principle that is in the right eye, for it is the essence of those two elements (in the body).

Space and air outside the body are non-corporeal but the vital breath in the body and the space providing the interior environment are corporeal. *Ākāśa* and *vāyu* are subtle, unlimited and imperceptible. Therefore they are immortal. The principle of this is said to be in the right eye. The preference for the right eye is derived from the Vedic tradition of India. In the *Pūrva Mīmāmsa* which is connected with the mantras, *Samhitas* and ritualistic performances of sacrifices, many figurative and geometrical considerations are given in which right and left, front and rear, above and below are all very important. This tradition is followed to the present day and has entered into the very language of Indian philosophy, psychology and mysticism. Two important terms that come often in every day transactions are *dakṣina* (right) and *vāma* (left). The Indian god *(īśvara)* has a right and left side. The right side is his male aspect and left is female. Therefore the place of a wife is considered to be on the left

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side of a husband. The favorite of a king is considered to be on the right side of his throne. The right side is considered to be the direction in which the deity of gifts is residing. Therefore what is given to a person with the right hand, by someone standing on the right side is also called a *dakṣina*. In India it is customary for superior persons to give *dakṣina* to their dependents and for disciples to give *dakṣina* to their guru.

All over the world we find such references to right and left. When right is taken as the truthful we find the following words in Roget's Thesaurus as synonyms for right: verity, actual, existence, reality, fact, actuality, principle, orthodoxy, gospel, holy writ, substantiality, genuineness, authenticity, precision, accuracy, delicacy, fineness, rigor and punctuality. These are only a few of the words which give preference to the right. Even in the Bible we find a reference to a dispute between Jesus' disciples to decide who should be put on his right side. Thus the reference here to the right eye seems to have mystical and psychic connotations far deeper than we can imagine.

In modern psychology and physiology a number of studies have been made about the right and left lobes of the brain. Many interesting phenomena have been discovered. For a long time, people thought the two hemispheres of the brain were identical halves of the same organ. Now it is known that nature has a greater sense of economy than human beings and she does not want any wee bit of the brain to be unused for the efficiency of the human body, mind and soul. Dichotic tests have been made both of listening and visual perception. The human brain has specific areas assigned for language control which is a essential aspect of cognition and connation. The first thing that strikes us is that a stream of consciousness surges up from where an object of cognition emerges at the perceptive level of any of our senses, particularly the eye. As the body is all covered with sensitive skin and thus the cutaneous stimulus is more holistic than the other senses, large areas of consciousness are always ready to be alerted by touch. In Popper and Eccles' *The Self and Its Brain*, a whole chapter is devoted to conscious perception. An equally interesting aspect is the self-conscious mind aiding our thought processes and speech.

. A more exciting account of the right and left of the brain is given in Robert Ornstein's *The Nature of Human Consciousness* (W. H. Freeman, San Francisco, 1973). A broad classification is

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made of the brain in which the right deals with wholes and is synthetic, simultaneous, integrative and spatial while the left deals with parts and is reductive, linear, sequential and differentiating. In recent years, even school curricula have had programs to make kids draw sketches of the same object with both hands in order to bring more parity to right and left. These drawings are very intriguing. The table below shows a list of lateral dichotomies suggested by the results of several experiments between 1864 and 1969.

Left hemisphere	Right hemisphere
Expression	Perception
Audito-articular	Retino-ocular
Propositionizing	Visual imagery
Linguistic	Visual or kinesthetic
Storage	Executive
Symbolic or propositional	Visual or imaginative
Educative of relations	Education of correlates
Verbal	Perceptual or non-verbal
Discrete	Diffuse
Symbolic	Visiospatial
Logical or analytic	Synthetic perceptual
Propositional	Appositional

The eye has two aspects. One is the appraisal of the situation of present life. The other is the relation of the present life with the causal body brought to this life from previous lives. The essence of vision brought over can have, as Erwin Schrodinger said, the footprints of the memories of ten thousand past lives. Jesus also spoke of the one eye whose light is the light of the whole body. About the offending eye of the flesh he even says that it can be plucked and thrown into fire. All this helps us to relate our right eye to its vertical sublimity which belongs to the spirit's perennial power of judgement and immortality.

We find the following pertinent references later in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad:* 3.9.21, 4.2.4, 6.2.16, 6.4.25; and in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad:* 3.2.1, 3.17.4, 4.5.2, 5.10.3; in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad:* 2.3.1, 2.4.1 and in the *Kauśītāki Upaniṣad:* 2.3.8, 2.11, 2.13.

We give two of them here:

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'That from which all speech recoils along with *manas*, being unable to reach it, he who knows the bliss of that *Brahman* sheds fear completely for all time.' So it is. 25

This *Brahma*, verily, shines when one speaks with speech; likewise this dies when one speaks not. Its brilliance goes to the eye; its vital breath, to the vital breath.

This *Brahma*, verily, shines when one sees with the eye; likewise this dies when one sees not. Its brilliance goes to the ear; its vital breath, to the vital breath.

This *Brahma*, verily, shines when one hears with the ear; likewise this dies when one hears not. Its brilliance goes to the mind; its vital breath, to the vital breath.

This *Brahma*, verily, shines when one thinks with the mind; likewise this dies when one thinks not. Its brilliance goes to the vital breath; its vital breath, to the vital breath.

All these divinities, verily, having entered into the vital breath, perish not when they die in the vital breath; therefrom indeed they come forth again. 26

Mantra 6

tasya haitasya puruṣasya rūpam. yathā māhārajanam vāsaḥ, yathā pāṇḍvāvikam, yathendragopaḥ, yathāgnyarciḥ, yathā puṇḍarīkam, tathā sakṛdvidyuttam; sakṛdvidyutteva ha vā asya śrīrbhavati ya evam veda; athāt ādeśaḥ - neti neti, na hyetasmāditi netyanyatparamasti; atha nāmadheyam - satyasya satyamiti; prāṇā vai satyam, teṣāmeṣa satyam. iti tṛtīyam brāhmaṇam.

Word Meanings

tasya ha - of that; *etasya* - this; *puruṣasya* - principle; *rūpam* - the form (is as follows); *yathā* - as; *māhārajanam* - dyed with tumeric; *vāsaḥ* - a cloth (is); *yathā* - as; *pāṇḍu* - grey; *āvikam* - sheep's wool (is); *yathā* - as; *indragopaḥ* - the (deep red) insect called indragopa (is); *yathā* - as; *agni-arciḥ* - a tongue of fire (is); *yathā* -

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as; *puṇḍarīkam* - a white lotus (is); *yathā* - as; *sakṛt-vidyuttam* - sudden lightening (is); *yaḥ* - who; *evam* - thus; *veda* - knows; *asya* - to one; *sakṛt-vidyutta* - sudden lightening; *eva* - like; *śrīḥ* - fame; *ha vai* - verily; *bhavati* - comes; *atha* - now; *ataḥ* - therefore; *ādeśaḥ* - the specification (of *brahman*); *itī* - this; *na* - not; *itī* - this; *na* - not; *itī etasamāt* - than this; *hi* - for; *anyat* - other; *param* - better (specification); *na* - not; *astī* - there is; *atha* - now; *nāmadheyam* - (its) name; *satyasya* - of truth; *satyam* - the truth; *itī; prāṇāḥ* - the vital force; *vai* - verily; *satyam* - (is) truth; *eṣaḥ* - it; *teṣām* - of them; *satyam* - (is) the truth

The form of that principle (the subtle body) is as follows: as is a cloth dyed with tumeric or grey sheep's wool or the (deep red) insect called *indragopa*, or a tongue of fire, or a white lotus, or a flash of lightning. One who knows thus verily attains fame like a flash of lightning. Now, therefore, the specification (about *brahman*): "Not this, not this." For there is no other or better specification than this. Now its sacred name - "the truth of truth." The vital force is truth, and it is the truth of that.

Look, here is that Person. Where did you see him last? In the morning sun. It was as if his hair and beard were on fire. There were shooting beams of golden rays finer than hair filling the entire sky. His beard was of a brighter hue of silver and gold filling the mountains and valleys, making the atmosphere and the world of cities, pastures, rivers and gardens. Something flitted by like an oriole - such deep yellow in the wings that were spread across the sky. Or was it only an illusion? All that we see now is this large flock of sheep grazing in the pastures. What a snow white apparition! It's all gone. Wonder of wonders - one moment it is all blue and next moment a brilliant red changing into violet. Is this true or is the whole world burning away in a conflagration of flames? Oh what a beauty - from the very heart of the flames there comes that white lotus with supremely brilliant petals. There is no fire there. Otherwise there could not be those dripping dewdrops all over the petals. In the morning glory

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of the sun, every drop changes into many-faceted diamonds. It is certainly hard to look on when dazzling light blinds you with a terrific brightness. Have no fear, it is no longer shining. It is only like a stray lightning. This is fantastic. We have heard of the indescribable glory of *Śrī*. Now it is as if we are bathed in it. All through, we have been asserting "it is, it is," and the next moment, with equal conviction, "it is not, it is not," *neti, neti*. However, one thing is sure - if you have seen it, you have not seen it. Before, you had only heard of the indescribable, but now you see it, hear it, feel it, yet you have no words to describe it. Have you no name for it, just to mention it to somebody else? Maybe we can say truth of truth *(satyasya satya)*. Is it truer than your breath? Of course. Breath is truest of all we know and yet this is truer than that. This is the truth of truths. And where is it? In your right eye. Yes, indeed, in my right eye.

Do you think you and I began our pilgrimage from this invisible dust imagined to be the first stir of the unfathomable and postulated to be the cause of all causes? Is that what the wise call *kāraṇātma*? Once a thing is located and one dares to offer it a name, it assumes a new status. It is called the revealer of self-identity. What does the rishi call it? Of course, *liṅga śarīra*. Does it spring from nowhere or has it a cumulative density? Is the fragrance of jasmine dense? No, it is unimaginably distributive. The nature of this is so close to that. When the garden breeze bears in its molecules the fragrance of jasmine, even the most accurate eye cannot figure out from which blossom the smell has come. This is not the first time the universe has come into its full formation. Many have been the deluges and many have been the re-emergences. If you and I are the sediments of the fragrance of several past lives, who can say from where you have originated and where I have originated? All that one can presume is that we have in us the fragrance and stench of several multitudes who have walked before us, desiring desires and adding their tears to the salty sea. Indeed, there is a difference between the smell that floats on the wind and a well-formed flower with bright petals, tossing its head in the passing breeze and inviting an eager bee to sip its honey. That visible, definable, precise form of limited dimension has no comparison to the fragrance. Such is the difference between the essence *(vāsanā)* and the embodied person in a perishable outfit of a corporeal body.

Can you say that we are just the essence of the fragrance of

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the past? Certainly not. This is not an inert smell. It's a smell in which every molecule has an in-built consciousness. Each conscient being has a muffled articulation replete with the memory of everything it has passed through. However molecular it is, each one has a repository of the grand tales of life that are recorded and passed on from one transit to the next over several lives through millennia. What is it? - a specificity of conditioning. Is it a mutant, mechanical fixation? No. Each fragment of it has in it the appropriate know-how to relate itself to what precedes it and what follows it. The most ingenious performances have their blueprint already maintained in a teleologic causal expression. That means every *vāsanā* is born of *vijñāna*. From where do they come in such an orderly way that they have a sequence in their system and an efficiency in their manifestation?

This is the wonder of wonders. Individually they are bricks. Collectively the plurality disappears in unity and there stands a mansion of magnificent magnitude. Are they real? Real enough to tempt. Real enough to strike fear in the onlooker. Real enough to evoke the desire to possess. What are they actually? The normative notion with which we measure our fantasies. You mean *māyā*? Yes, indeed. But don't we experience it? Yes, we do. Aren't we all clothed in dignity? But you will not allow the ounces of your clothes to be pulled off one by one. That will put you to the shame of nakedness. So what is real? The yarn or the cloth? Or the dexterity of putting the yarn in a certain way which answers the need of the consumer? Where does the stuff belong? Partly to the cotton fiber, partly to your *vijñāna*, the understanding of the conversion of the fiber into yarn and yarn into cloth. What is true of the bricks, mansion, cotton yarn, is also true of the sun and moon and starry heavens. And, indeed, the moral world below.

Who is the magician here? This is a joint game played by two magicians, the magician in the sun of the firmament above and the magician in the eye which sits on the right side of your face. What is the truth of nobility? It is its desirability. Are these desires truly desirable if we seek the immortal and the eternal? When you jump into the river to have a dip, do you want the water to remain frozen as a static entity for all eternity? Don't you enjoy a running river? Yes, of course. This phantasmagoria of the world is that running river. There is the novelty of the passing moment without which the wizard of the world cannot

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make an abundant display of all the potentials of manifestation. But there are people renowned for their wisdom who postulate the eternal in it. Don't you agree? That is the philosopher's game. The atomists are fond of playing games with their indestructible atoms. This moment one handful of atoms makes a bunny with twinkling eyes and in the next moment a bearded philosopher with mathematical certitude. Do atoms have a mind of their own to dream the variegations of creations into which they go? If the atom is a self-animated entity, what animates who? What accounts for its spirit? And what, indeed, is the carrier of the spirit? Oh, there is no end to this dispute between the atomists and the logicians and the realists and the phenomenologists. That is not the essential question here. Do these apparitions give us any clue as to the ultimate reality to which all these festivals of fantasy belong?

When the dialogue between Bālāki, the Gārgya, and Ajātaśatru, the king of Benāres, was initiated, Bālāki promised to teach Ajātaśatru the secret of *brahmavidyā*. The gentle and generous king agreed to the proposal with an open mind and listened patiently to Gārgya. Gārgya presented several perceptual aspects of the manifested world as a way of knowing the Absolute. King Ajātaśatru dismissed each lesson as a relativistic aspect of the manifesting Absolute. When Gārgya came to his wit's end, the king openly told him that what he knew was very peripheral. On seeing his limited knowledge of the Absolute, Gārgya humbled himself and requested the king to teach him the science of the Absolute. The king said that it was contrary to tradition for a *brāhmaṇa* to ask a *kṣatriya* to teach him *brahmavidyā*. At the same time the king did not want the traditional reverence shown to a *brāhmaṇa* to be withheld from Gārgya. So the king respectfully got up, went to Gārgya, took his hands and raised him to his feet, assuring him that he would certainly teach him *brahmavidyā*.

Then the king took Gārgya to a person who was in deep sleep. The king called aloud every name of the Absolute or the Self suggested by Gārgya and waited for the sleeping person to wake up. That had no effect on the sleeping man who continued to sleep. That was a demonstrative proof that the names given to the Self did not reach the person because his true Self did not seem to be where the man was in a state of unconsciousness. So the king shook him hard until he woke up. That was a good les-

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son to teach Gārgya that the Self has two aspects. One is the perceivable which can manifest itself as the animation of a corporeal body. Its occupation of the physical self has a beginning and an end. As the king had promised Gārgya to reveal to him the full secret of the Absolute he did not want the latter to go away without knowing *brahman*. A categorical statement was made that *brahman* has only two forms. The corporeal made up of three perishable elements is complemented by two invisible elements that belong to the subtle world. Any person who is in search of the Absolute should necessarily be qualified to discriminate between the eternal *(nitya)* and the fleeting *(anitya)*. We have already seen that in the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya* of Śri Śankarācārya the very first qualification expected of an aspirant for *brahmavidyā* is to have the power to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal *(nitya anitya vastu viveka)*. The king demonstrated to Gārgya that the nature of the Self cannot be retained by the physical body of a person because the gross body belongs to the category of the mortal. From this lesson one should know that in one's deeper search for the true self within, one should avoid the gross, the perceptual, the limited and the mortal. All the same, its essence can come within the ambit of experience. It can be called *satya*, even when that reality is of a temporary and relativistic order.

Between that experiential aspect of the Self and the true Self, there are several gradations of manifestation. There are two forms of classification to know these grades. One is in terms of the elements: earth, water, fire, air and *ākāśa*. The other is the degrees of refinement in body formation such as the *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *kāraṇa*. In the *Bṛghu Valli* of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad, anna, prāṇa, manas, vijñāna* and *ānanda* are given as a hierarchy rising from the gross to the causal. In this gross body of ours, on analysis, we find that from a single cell to the perfected body of a child that is being delivered from the mother's womb, there is an engineering of body building which has the phases of intentionality, instrumentality, structural relevance, functional energization and, ultimately, task performance. In the modern world of genetic understanding, the intentionality guiding individuation equips the individual with appropriate organs to mutually aid the carrying out, step by step, of every function expected of an individual for the total unfoldment of the intrinsic meaning or purpose of life. We were already given the example of the for-

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mation of the eye in the embryo where every layer that goes into the completion of optical vision is so perfected that the polarization of the mighty sun and the optic device of a camera-like eye have between them an entire world of factual experience with the variegated features of form, shape, color, time-span, distance in space and the balancing of figures. It continuously feeds into our spirit the complexity of our worldly life, the essence of which is consolidated moment after moment, so that it can be ultimately taken into another life as the inheritance from the present.

Thus the *Upaniṣad* takes every pain to teach us how the mortal is interlinked with the immortal and how the physical is fashioned so the spirit can articulate through it. In spite of the mortality of the body and the transience of life on earth, time and space are given another dimension so that many life-long experiences can be linked to make this world a training ground, so to say, of the soul that aspires to perfection. Hence in this mantra several technical terms are brought to our attention such as the *sūkṣma*, the *sthūla* and the triple agencies in us: *vijñānamaya*, *vāsanāmaya* and *liṅga śarīra*. Here there is a hurdle. A strict Vedāntin should limit himself or herself to the dichotomy of the mortal and the immortal, the gross and the subtle, the perceptible and the imperceptible and should finally land on the absolute certitude of the reality of the supreme Self by negating the reality of the self through which realization is attained. The method offered here is that of negation, *neti*, which is negated again with *neti*. This method is counterbalanced with the affirmation of the affirmation, *satyasya satya*. The first *satya* is that we breathe our life. The second *satya* is that our true being is beyond this breath. Here is something like a quantum leap which is given elsewhere as *yato vāco nivṛttante aprāpya manasasaḥ*, "from This words recoil and the mind does not reach it."

Brāhmaṇa 4

Introduction

According to tradition, *Yajur Veda* has two branches, *Taittirīya* and *Vājasaneyi*. Yājñavalkya was a disciple of Vaiśam-

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pāyana. Once there was a dispute between them. Consequently, Yājñavalkya was obliged to leave the abode of his guru. Those who were aligned with Vaiśampāyana are considered to belong to the *Taittirīya Śākha* or *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda*. Connected with the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda* are the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka* and *Upaniṣad*. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine at the end of the *Āraṇyaka* are considered to be the *Upaniṣad*. After leaving Vaiśampāyana, Yājñavalkya did intense penance and re-established himself. The sun-god came in the form of a horse and revealed truth to Yājñavalkya. Hence his school is known as *Vājasaneyi Śākha* or *Śukla Yajur Veda*.

In this *brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya and his disciple/wife Maitreyī are presented. The dialogue between them is considered to be an arch-model of dialectics in the Upaniṣadic world. Maitreyī, the young wife of Yājñavalkya, was not a wife in the conventional sense of that term. She was a niece of the great woman saint, Gārgi, who was also known as Vācaknavī and Brahmavādinī. Maitreyī's ambition was to become an enlightened person like Gārgi. In those days of yore it was quite unusual for a young woman to seek initiation from a wisdom teacher like Yājñavalkya. Yājñavalkya's wife, Kātyāyanī, thought that it would not look right for a guru of Yājñavalkya's reputation to have a young woman living with him without any marital ties. So she promised to help Maitreyī if she would agree to be her legal co-wife. Maitreyī had no interest in conjugal pleasures. She only wanted wisdom from the Guru, but to satisfy Kātyāyanī she agreed to have a marriage ritual. Kātyāyanī herself arranged for the wedding and, on the very first night, Maitreyī was left with Yājñavalkya for their familiarization. Maitreyī did not want to have any private or secretive time with Yājñavalkya. She was interested in a philosophical discourse. So she wanted Kātyāyani also to be present when she was talking with Yājñavalkya. The first question she asked was for the explanation of the nature of *sūtrātma*, the thread of unity of the Self on which everything in the universe is strung. Yājñavalkya gladly answered Maitreyī. She became a devout student and proved to be a very wise woman.

The second chapter thus far has been a preparation of the seeker to have the necessary qualifications to know the Absolute, to have a high level of spiritual purity such as that which can be seen in a child. Thus a baby calf was presented as a symbol of

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one who can see from which sources of the sensory-system and the mind one can become a bound person in *samsāra*. Indications were given in that reference itself that an all-out effort is to be made to break away from the pleasure-seeking tendencies of the body-mind matrix. A similar reference comes in Nārāyaṇa Guru's *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* where he speaks of the aspirant having the vigilance of a hunter to shoot down the five cunning birds that are bent on enjoying the mortal fruits of the tree of life. One has to drastically revise and reform one's value outlook to turn away from *samsāra* to *mokṣa*.

Yājñavalkya provided a model by declaring to Maitreyī that he had resolved to bring his householdership to an end and to go solitarily into the path of the Absolute. Maitreyī was not an ordinary woman to accept such a decree without knowing the exact value the rishi was seeing in the alternative path he was choosing. Finding that his choice was for the immortal and the realization of the truth of truth, she also wanted to seek the one truth without a second. It is with this background in mind that we should listen to the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī.

Life on earth is like a preparation for the spirit to know all the varieties of manifestations into which the pure Self can go without betraying its true reality. It is a pleasurable festivity of the senses and mental fantasies that can be projected. It can also be the extreme pain into which an embodied life can go before a turning point comes to the individuated self to seek its true nature or the true Self. The first half of life, so to say, is given to the discipline of knowing all the implications of word power. From the beyond *(para)*, the reverberating freedom of sound moves in all directions until it is structured into meaningful sounds that can be articulated. Before the articulation a psychic design forms which conditions and limits the *para*, called *paśyanti*. Then it passes through the darkest phase of mystery, like a child magically emerging from its mother's womb, fully formed, with all the resources to be utilized for its life expression during the entire cycle of its life. This is *madhyama* which, like the womb, is a transit area. What issues out of it is *vaikharī*, articulation. The ruggedness of the physicality of what emerges is pointed out by the sound *khara*. That is qualified with *vat*. *Kha* is a concretized aspect of *ka*. *Ra* is the eternal symbol of happiness or joy. The coming together of *kha* and *ra* has in it an interplay of the heart *(tīvra)* and the light *(komala)*.

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With the conjoining of consonants and vowels a million words are coined. One by one they occupy the central focus of a person's consciousness as a thought passes through the mind, pacing step by step *(pada)*. Thoughts are not possible without the sequence of words. Words themselves are generated out of colored sounds called *varṇa*. This magical device of a word occupying the central focus of consciousness has the mighty power to transfigure an external entity into a remembered or articulated word. This is our greatest friend and our greatest enemy. There is a liberating light *(prakāśa)* that enables consciousness to move and expand. But the restriction of the meaning of a word has an arresting frontier beyond which the connotation cannot go. Thus the word is a binding agent.

The words that free us ultimately take us to the four limbs *(pādas)* of *praṇava*. The *akāra* of the *praṇava* symbolizes both the permanence and impermanence, beauty and grotesqueness, grace and curse, good and evil of the wakeful world of transaction. Our own subjectivity can make a snare of entanglement with memories and imaginations, making us like spiders caught in their own webs or it can show us that the pure light behind the subject has no names, forms or promptings for action in it. That is the revelation of the *ukāra* of *praṇava*. We go into the deep unconscious every night, partly to prune off the subject-object experiences of the wakeful and the dream. Then the more significant aspects of the name and form which have gone into the dynamic of *kriya* or *karma* are stacked away in the memory storage from which a long-term *samskāra* can be evolved, ranging from the days of childhood to that crucial point where one wants to return to one's origin, the pure Self. In the state of deep sleep, represented by the *makāra* of the *praṇava*, the witnessing element of individuation is held for a little while in the transparency of *ānanda*. Night after night we are reminded that we are not this body, we are not this mentation clothed with words, nor are we even the wrong desires that prompt us to go from one fantasy to another.

In the first mantra of this *brāhmaṇa* we have to walk a new path of life. Here the word "life" stands for the immortal. In the first *Adhyāya*, 3.27-28, we made an ardent prayer to be resurrected from the veiling untruth to truth, from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge and from the frozen state of mortality to the freedom of the immortal. It is entirely the indi-

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vidual's choice whether to remain with the unreal *(asat)*, darkness *(tamas)* and mortality *(mṛtyu)*. The Indian scheme of spirituality is not exactly a theory of evolution. It is maximizing one's devolution to an absolute point of negativity where the search for freedom, knowledge and immortality becomes imperative. The true evolution of the individuated spirit to reclaim its true nature starts only from the point of being initiated by one's guru to seek the path of realization. The true state without distinction of name, form or the mistaken identity of a doer is contrasted with the refracted consciousness of the Self *(abhāsa caitanya)* in which it becomes temporarily darkened by the cloud of unknowing. The unblemished reality and ever-effulgent knowledge behind the refracted consciousness, the unexpended Absolute, is the *pratyagātma*.

There is a turning of the table when we come to this point. The two faces of the same coin whose attributes look so contradictory are given in mantras three to thirteen in the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*. We are introduced to the Self as the most subtle, yet confronting us with its grossness. It alienates itself from us as a lost voice far away and, at the same time, it blasts right in the middle ear of our reasoning. It becomes multitudinous by clothing itself in the varieties of forms, names, colors and movements. Yet it unifies the meaning of all in the throb of our hearts. The very first thing the pilgrim has to grapple with in his or her initial entry into the path of wisdom is to unloosen the Gordian knot. This is so very beautifully put in Plato's allegory of the cave with the metaphor of the man who has never walked and whose legs are frozen by inactivity trying to take his first paces in a path which is unfamiliar to him. It is like walking backward with one's eyes blindfolded amidst an unsympathetic crowd. A man or woman who has chosen the spiritual path with absolute conviction is deemed crazy by all and even one's best friend can doubt the credibility of the seeker's choice. From the first day of our birth we have learned to grab, to receive, to accumulate, to possess. Here you are asked to open your fist and give away what you have received, possessed, accumulated. You are asked to give up three specific claims: your identity with the possessiveness of a spouse, your pride of having generated a person of your resemblance to continue your heritage and the possession you have legally established over what you can hold as indisputably yours. For a man it is his wife, his children and his proper-

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For a woman, it is her husband, the obligations of her motherhood and both the physical and spiritual inheritance for which she is valued. This reversal of attitude is termed here as *sannyāsa*. In the *Bhagavad Gīta*, which contains the essence of the *Upaniṣads*, *sannyāsa* is re-examined and revalued; relinquishment *(tyāga)* is put in the place of renunciation. *Tyāga* has a moderating influence on *sannyāsa*.

The traditional Indian way of presenting higher wisdom is by first exposing us to whatever a person becomes familiar with in the ordinary course of life. In the presentation of the genesis of life, all species from ant to human were presented as the progeny of Manu and Śatarūpa. No superiority was assigned to any particular species. At the level of basic vegetative need all living beings were considered as of equal status. The universal father made food for all from the *devas* to the humble grass - one common food. The instinct to propagate one's species was also the same for all living beings. Only when the life forces seemed to have opposing characters did the need to seek the path to immortality become a special need of homo sapiens, the thinking animal. In the course of the evolution of intelligent beings, they had occasion to think about death and birth. When a man and woman come together, desiring to have a child, and the man deposits his seed in his wife's womb and waits for that seed to grow into a child, he has to wait for almost a year *(samvatsara)*. During that time the man's thoughts naturally go to his progeny hidden from him in the mother's womb. He knows that it is he who has entered his own wife's womb to become a person like himself. In other words, he knows that he is going to be his own wife's son. Outside his wife, he is her husband, but as the child growing in her womb, he is the son and she the mother. In the course of time that son will deposit his seed in his wife's womb and that child will be his grandson and he will be that grandson, too. In these three generations he sees his own identity in himself, his son and his grandson. That brings him to the conclusion that it is one and the same Self which is eternally repeating and there is no plurality of selves.

Yet each individuated being has a separate body, separate environment, separate assignment of duties. There is every possibility for a person to have a mistaken identity. The basis of mistaken identity is one's bondage with the body that evolves. Thus one person becomes many and the many think they are

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many. That is the beginning of *saṃsāra*. The plurality of selves such as I and you, he and she, we and they are all born of ignorance precipitated by wrong identity with the non-Self. When such identities come one is not only identified with one's body but also with the environmental factors to which the body belongs. If another child comes to the same mother or father, that is considered a brother or sister and the brother's or sister's children become nephews and nieces and between them, cousins. If they have occasional differences, the priest will consider himself a *brāhmaṇa*. One who takes up the security of the clan will become a *kṣatriya*. A child born to a *brāhmaṇa* automatically identifies himself with *brāhmaṇa*. A child born to a *kṣatriya* automatically identifies himself with *kṣatriya*. This kind of mistaken identity becomes deeply ingrained in the memory system of individuals. In the course of time, as the *varṇas* crystallize into social groups, these identities born of the non-Self such as *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, etc., go so deep into the unconscious that they think of themselves as having the *dharma* of these *varṇas*. One who has the identification with *brāhmaṇa* thinks he should maintain a sacrificial fire at home; the *kṣatriya* teaches martial arts to his children. The *vaiśya*, even though he has the means to learn the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*, goes on the beaten track of the *vaiṣya* and becomes a trader. The *śūdra* who is under the self-hypnosis of his own bondage to necessity considers himself a wretch, having no right to be educated or to have knowledge. All these result from the the confusion of self-identity.

Here Yājñavalkya takes a very drastic step to enforce the discipline of *sannyāsa* on those who want to be liberated from the intellectual, social and moral snare of conceit. A seeker should forgo any identification as man or woman or as having any socially structured *varṇa* and go to the very basic notion that one is nothing other than the Self, the one Self without a second, which has no beginning or end. It is not located in just one body but is in everyone. There are certain conditionings of ignorance which are precipitated during a course of identity crisis. The first is the mistaken notion of space. The limited body is encompassed in a three-dimensional space or one can even say four-dimensional or n-dimensional. Because of this identification with the body's confinement in space, a person thinks he or she is short or tall, fat or thin. Although a person belongs to a world where the only limit is the limitless sky and the ultimate horizon that extends

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beyond all horizons, he or she thinks of himself or herself as a puny creature believing in the exclusivity of space and impenetrability of matter.

It was to break the concept of limited space that in the legendary story Maitreyī is presented to put the question on *sūtrātma* to Yājñavalkya. That dialogue begins with a common sense view and culminates in absolute transcendence of space and matter. Maitreyī asks Yājñavalkya "What is *sūtrātma?*" Yājñavalkya puts a counter question: "What do you see here Maitreyī?"

Maitreyī: "I see in this room you, my teacher, and your wife who is my sister and these household articles."
Yājñavalkya: "Where do you see all this?"
Maitreyī: "In the *tapograha*, in this abode of the recluse."
Yājñavalkya: "Where do you see the *tapograha?*"
Maitreyī: "In the *tapovana*, in this forest of the hermitage."
Yājñavalkya: "Where do you see the *tapovana?*"
Maitreyī: "In the *bhāratavarṣa*, Indian sub-continent."
Yājñavalkya: "Where is *bhāratavarṣa?*"
Maitreyī: "On our planet, the good earth."
Yājñavalkya: "Where is the good earth?"
Maitreyī: "In the *brahmāṇḍa.*"
Yājñavalkya: "Where is the *brahmāṇḍa?*"
Maitreyī: "In the universe."
Yājñavalkya: "Where is the universe?"
Maitreyī: "The universe is in my knowledge"
Yājñavalkya: "Where is your knowledge?"
Maitreyī: "My knowledge is in my mind."
Yājñavalkya: "Where is your mind?"
Maitreyī: "My mind is in my body."
Yājñavalkya: "Where is your body?"
Maitreyī: "My body is in this room."

Even without Yājñavalkya saying another word, Maitreyī could see the one string of consciousness connecting everything in the world as belonging to a single system called *sūtrātma.* This is explicitly described in the *Bhagavad Gīta* as being like pearls *(maṇi)* strung on a string, *(sūtra):* "Everything you experience is strung on me like precious beads on a string."

It is essential for us to correct the colorations of our minds, the prejudices and conditionings to which we are exposed. Every

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prejudice, every conditioning, every coloration is a bondage. Hence a human being is called a *bandha*, one who is bound. There is the need for liberation for everyone, liberation from prejudices, wrong identities, mistaken notions and habit formations. This is called *mokṣa*. The burning away of social, moral and spiritual bondage is called *nirvāṇa* (burning out). When a physical bondage is done with, its place is taken by an instinctive bondage, a moral bondage or an emotional bondage.

When a child is in its mother's womb it is part of the mother. It is fed with the nourishment of the mother and its *prāṇa* comes from her. When the child comes out the mother and child are cut in two by clipping the umbilical cord. The very next moment the child cries for food. The nipple of the mother's breast is tucked in the child's mouth. What is cut in the umbilical cord is restored in the lips. The bondage between them remains for the rest of their lives. Thus literally we are bound. In all other animals and birds, the off-spring go away from their parents. Only human children cling to their parents with obligatory bonds. Hence Yājñavalkya makes it imperative that for one's higher realization, one should leave one's spouse, one's children and one's property. Śankara knew that these instructions would be questioned by those who have identification with the world. So he categorically said that those who dispute these requirements are certainly bound people who refuse to know the higher teachings of the *śruti*.

He also pointed out that such objections are made by those who have not resolved the difference between *ātma* and *anātma* in their minds. There is actually no such thing as *jīvātma*. It is a wrong interjection of the idea of the Self into the body that makes one think the Self is like a bird imprisoned in the body. This is the very first qualification made by the lesson given to Maitreyī: everything is included, including matter and the plurality of identities. No comparison is made between the dwelling place of *paramātma* and that of *jīvātma*. There is no second place assigned to the Self either in the body or anywhere. Although Nārāyaṇa Guru wrote his major theses on the Self *(Ātmopadeśa Śatakam, Advaita Dīpika, Brahmavidyā Pañcakam. Aṛivu)* he never made a dichotomy of *jīvātma* and *paramātma*. He mentions only *ātma* which is identical with *ānanda* and *brahman*. We should keep Śankara's clarifications in mind as we go into the fourth *brāhmaṇa*.

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Mantra 1

maitreyīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ, udyāsynvā are'-hamasmātsthānādasmi, hanta te'naya kātyāyanyā-ntam karavāṇīti.

Word Meanings

yājñavalkyaḥ - Yājñavalkya; *uvāca ha* - said; *maitreyī* - O Maitreyī; *iti, are* - my dear; *aham* - I; *asmāt sthānāt* - from this (householder's) life; *udyāsyat* - about to step up; *vai* - verily; *asmi* - am; *hanta* - well; *anayā kātyāyanyā* - with this Kātyāyanī; *te* - (of) your (relationship); *antam* - an end; *karvāṇi* - let me make; *iti*

"Maitreyī," said Yājñavalkya: "I am about to renounce this life, my dear. Well, let me end your relationship with this Kātyāyanī."

In this mantra we come to a problem which affects the entire human race. It is of paramount importance because it decides the exact relationship between man and woman. All over the world marriage is considered a sacred covenant which binds husband and wife. In every religion detailed instructions are given for the duties to be carried out by the husband in relation to the wife and the wife in relation to the husband. In the Hindu Law of India, at the very outset, one of the most important people referred to is Yājñavalkya. This mantra, which presents the proposed dissolution of the sacred marital relationship between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi and his other wife, Kātyāyanī, is a pivotal point which is considered to be the first officially recognized precedent for the dissolution of marriage.

We have in India two great authorities: *śruti*, what is heard *(a priori)*, and *smṛti*, what is remembered *(a posteriori)*. The most ancient custom in India was to look upon the mother as the first guru of a child. Her care and instructions give the child introduction into spoken language. At the *vidyā ārambha* of the child, guruhood is transferred to the father, and with the *upanayana*, the child enters the path of truth *(brahmacārya)*. In ancient days

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we had forest schools conducted by very wise teachers. These schools were called *gurukulas*. Parents sent their children to the *gurukula* at the age of twelve. They would study there, according to the requirements of the child's parents, the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*. As a teacher conducted his students in the path of *brahmavidyā*, the guru was a *brahmacārī*, one who sits, walks and lives in the path of the Absolute. That did not mean the guru was unmarried. Later the word *brahmacārī* came to mean a person who conforms to celibacy. This is only an incidental meaning. The true meaning is to live in the path of the Absolute. Usually the students returned home at age twenty-four. After graduation, when they returned home, it was normal for them to enter into the life of householders. This was the time for these youngsters to remember and apply what they had heard in the *gurukula*. What they had heard was recorded in the minds of people as *śruti*, that which teaches universal truth which never changes. *Smṛti* is the application of the teaching of the gurus which is to be modified according to the historical setting, current conventions, local beliefs and personal requirements of the student. Hence the *smṛtis* are subject to correction from time to time.

They are divided into primary and secondary, the latter being later in date. The primary *smṛtis* are again classified into *sūtras* and *dharmaśāstras*. Gautama, Baudhayana, Apastambe, Vasiṣṭha and Viṣṇu are the chief *sūtra* writers; Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada are the most noteworthy of the writers of *Dharmaśāstras*. Of these, Manu is of paramount authority on secular law. According to Hindu tradition, Manu lived in prehistoric times, but according to Max Muller he lived in 200 B. C.

The *Manusmṛti* considers law under 18 titles:
1. recovery of debts; 2. deposit and pledge; 3. sales without ownership; 4. concerns among partners; 5. resumption of gifts; 6. nonpayment of wages or hire; 7. nonperformance of agreement; 8. recision of sales and purchases; 9. disputes between master and servant; 10. disputes regarding boundaries; 11. assault; 12. defamation; 13. theft; 14. robbery and violence; 15. adultery; 16. duties of man and wife; 17. partition; 18. gambling and betting. These titles include both civil and criminal law. The *Smṛti* is a veritable reservoir to which reference

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may become necessary at times on any question involving fundamental concepts for their proper understanding and appreciation.

Among the *smṛti* writers, Manu's authority is supreme and paramount. It is stated that a *smṛti* that is opposed to Manu is not authentic. The celebrated commentary by Vijñāneśvara, the *Mitākṣara*, was based upon Yājñavalkya's *Dharmaśāstra*, who comes next in point of time and authority, and Nārada is the last of the more important of the *smṛti* writers. The *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* appears to have been compiled about 600 years later than *Manu Smṛti*, and *Nārada Smṛti* about a hundred years still later.

It is amazing to find not a few modern doctrines and rules of procedure in litigation in some of the *smṛtis* composed more than a thousand years ago. Systematic thinking about law, its nature and norms, all go in the name of Manu. The *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* divided the entire law of life into *Ācara* (conduct and practices), *Vyavahāra* (secular law or civil law) and *Prāyaścitta* (penances). Civil law became a separate compartment, closely concerned however with the legal field as such. [27]

Thus we find that Yājñavalkya is the most important name after Manu in Indian spiritual, moral, social and legal life. His own case is quoted as the first historically known incident of two aspects - the dissolution of marriage and the settlement of the claims of women to property. According to tradition, divorce between a Hindu husband and wife is an impossibility. This was established in court as recently as 1963. For a Hindu husband and wife, "who by their marriage had entered into a sacred and indissoluble union, and neither conversion, nor degradation, nor loss of caste, nor the violation of an agreement against polygamy, dissolves the marriage tie." [28]

It is rather paradoxical to think that the very authority who was instrumental in making marriage a permanent covenant is here coming to his own young wife Maitreyī to tell her he is going to dissolve his marriage relationship with her and Kātyāyanī. The *Hindu Marriage Act of 1955* includes in it many special acts which preserve the rights of both spouses. However, we find later certain special clauses were instituted as grounds for legal per-

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mission for divorce. What is noteworthy in this historical incident of two people who are not only bound together by the sanctity of marriage but also by their common pursuit of wisdom is that Yājñavalkya did not walk away from his wives without giving them notice. His intention was not only to inform his partners in life of his decision to live as a *sannyāsin* but also to obtain their permission for him to break away for his spiritual deliverance. Hindu Law includes, among other rights of both men and women, the privilege of a person to uphold his or her right to obtain spiritual bliss. This situation compares the merits of living a worldly life with those of the exclusive pursuit of a member of a family for his or her spiritual right. This is so beautifully brought out by this mantra in which the husband shows utmost compassion to his dear wife and takes her into full confidence. He explains to her what he intends to carry out with her cooperation. This gives a chance to the wife to uphold her right, not as a woman or as a man, but as a person, to seek the path of immortality. We are here entering into a dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī on this fundamental issue.

In the *New Testament*, Mark: 10, we read as follows:

> When Jesus came to the coast of Judea, the Pharisees came to him and asked him 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?' tempting him. And he answered and said unto them 'What did Moses command you?' And they said, 'Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away'. And Jesus answered unto them. 'For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. And they twain shall be one flesh: so they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. . . .Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery'.

In the same chapter Jesus' concern with little children is shown. When his disciples were not allowing the children to come to him, Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto

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me and forbid them not; for such is the Kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein."

Here we find the Jewish Manu, the law-giver Moses, being corrected and revalued by Jesus. In the *Mitākṣara* a lot of tempering of the law is done where the commentator thought that Manu was too harsh. According to the Holy Qur'an, the home or family is a religious community and it is the moral and spiritual stability of the home that makes life beautiful and substantial to live on earth. The Qur'an declares that man and woman have the same rights in the eyes of God: "In the words of Allah, we made both the man and the woman from the same self." According to Chapter Seven, Section Three, Verses Twenty-six and Twenty-seven, God created woman to be man's cloth and he created man to be woman's cloth and there was nothing for them to be ashamed of when they are trustworthy to each other. Further it says, "Woman is made to give man his inner poise and peace of mind." Later in the development of Islam, dissolution of marriage came to be much more quickly effected than in other communities. Very definite instructions are given in Chapter Four on how marital life is to be lived at home and that divorce is allowed only under very impossible situations. We can see that great care is taken so that no injustice is done to women. Even in the instances where a woman on her own wants divorce, the settlement of property to which the woman has a claim is upheld.

Now, here in the *śruti* we come across the problem of the dissolution of marriage which is regulated by the *smṛti*. One of Śankara's foremost disciples, Sureśvara, wrote a commentary on the dialogue. Shoun Hino, a reputed Japanese scholar, has written a doctoral thesis on Sureśvara's *Vārtika* which covers the fourth and fifth *brāhmaṇas* of the second chapter. We will have recourse to this scholarly work as we find our way through the dialogue of Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī. Śankara calls our attention to a binding statement given in the first mantra of the second chapter in which Ajātaśatru told Gārgya "I shall tell you about *brahman*," as a preparation for the fourth *brāhmaṇa*. Sureśvara emphasizes the aphoristic remark known as the *vidyāsūtra*, made in I.4.7: "Let him meditate (on that *brahman*) as the *ātman*."

The man, who has destroyed the cause of the transmig-

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ratory existence by means of his knowledge of the nature of reality (*viz. the Brahman)* and his own self (viz. the individual consciousness), and thereby destroyed the entire transmigratory existence, becomes liberated. 29

We should look closely at the mantra to understand the love and care of Yājñavalkya on one side, and on the other, his spiritual intention about which he has no doubt in his mind. He calls Maitreyī separately, addressing her by her personal name. Then he says, "From here I am going into a higher plane." In the world of *samsāra* there are many horizontal paths, some leading to *preyas*, worldly prosperity, some leading to *śreyas*, lasting values. *Preyas* is perishable in this world itself. Certain merits of *śreyas* will accompany the person even after death. But those can be taken at most to hell or heaven. The burning of firewood has two stages. It smolders for some time, giving off black smoke; then leaping flames come. It will turn into a conflagration if there is enough wind. After the flames subside the firewood is covered with ashes. But there will be cinders under the ashes. When a person lives on earth in a physical body one is first burnt through one's five senses and mind. When physical death comes only the *sthūla śarīra* is gone. Afterwards there is a second stage of burning where it is not the body that burns but the purposiveness and intentionality which has created the *karma* in the initial stage of bodily existence. All the unresolved aspects of *karma* have to burn into the furtherance of the path which happens in the astral planes. When the second burning is over the causal aspect of the person is again ready to return to the physical world for another cycle of correction and perfection. All these are to be treated as humanity's traffic on the horizontal paths of life.

When a person's discrimination finally grows into the sorting of the chaff and grain of *karma*, one comes to a point where one sees only one merit in *karma*. At best it helps to learn by trial and error that what is to be sought is not in the world of name *(nāma)* and form *(rūpa)*, seer *(dṛk)* and the seen *(dṛṣya)*, actor *(kartā)* and action *(karma)*. After toiling in the world of the visibles a realization comes that one has been seeing only with one's physical eyes and one's spiritual eye is still blinded with ignorance. Then one knows that if one truly knew the Self, he or she would not have any trace of dissatisfaction. This is exemplified in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* where Nārada, after learning the *Four-*

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Vedas, Vedāṅgas and every science that was available for him to study, found that all his learning brought him only to the feeling that he had missed the most precious of all knowledge, the knowledge of the Self. When Nārada petitioned to Sanatkumāra that he was still having *śoka* (sorrow) in spite of his learning all *śāstras*, Sanatkumāra asked him to tell him everything that he had learned. After patiently listening to the long list of subjects which Nārada had learned, Sanatkumāra said that Nārada knew every thing only by name. This is somewhat like what Bergson describes in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* as knowing a thing by going around it and not by getting into it and being it. Yājñavalkya here refers to the latter as ascending into heights.

Nārāyaṇa Guru, in his *Darśana Mālā*, categorizes *vidyā* and *avidyā, parā* and *aparā, prakṛti* and *pradhāna, tamas* and *māyā* as the eight categories of *māyā*. Normally one would expect *vidyā* and *parā* to be outside the scope of *māyā*. This is because we do not recognize that *māyā* is a comprehensive term which indicates duality. Another verse of Nārāyaṇa Guru's says that even the *sukṛtis* (persons of good action) go round and round, forcefully compelled to go in the vicious circle of right and wrong. This happens because we know only the conditioned way of desiring the meritorious and walking in horizontal paths. At the very outset of the dialogue we are given the greatest secret of spiritual ascension so that we may know that from the pluralities of causes and effects and the multitudinous demonic cities *(gandharvanagara)*, one has to go into the all-converging unitiveness in which the depth and the summit are interchangeable. Going into heaven has in it some similarity to transcendence. But Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad Gīta* that when merit *(puṇya)* decays one returns to the world of immanence. To see the immanent in the transcendent and the transcendent in the immanent is the secret of unitive wisdom.

Although Yājñavalkya tells Maitreyī that he is leaving the frame of reference of the householder's life, Maitreyī is not sure where he is going and for what purpose. Naturally, as a wife she wants to know if she and her co-wife have made life unpleasant for their husband in any way. If it were their mistake they could correct it. Hence her question in the next mantra of where he is going and for what purpose. Before that, Yājñavalkya does something which is typical of a guru - prompting a disciple to seek the right path. He puts it this way - "Maitreyī, I want to sever your

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relationship with Kātyāyanī. I will do that by dividing my wealth and giving each one her separate share." From the worldly side this indicates how just he was in settling the properties of his wives. The inner meaning of this act was that Maitreyī would not have to feel obliged to Kātyāyanī as she would if they were holding the same estate.

This is a good chance for Maitreyī to take her own husband as a model and renounce. She has no children. Her husband is going away by his own decision. All that she has to decide is against holding property. Then, like Yājñavalkya, she will be free from the three-fold bondage of *samsāra:* the tie of marital obligations, the tie of love for a child, and the sense of ownership of undisputed wealth. Maitreyī is so wise and even shrewd to take the right hint from Yājñavalkya. If she wants to free herself and ascend into the realms of Self-knowledge, here is her chance. In such a short mantra, the crossroads of life is very clearly shown. It is a paradoxical situation to which every wisdom-loving person has to come at least once in the course of several lives if not in the course of each life. Yājñavalkya was not in any terrible unhealthy haste. He has all the patience in the world to give full attention to Maitreyī and to a correct appraisal of the situation.

Mantra 2

sā hovāca maitreyī. yannu ma iyam bhagoḥ sarvā pṛthivī vittena pūrṇa syāt katham tenāmṛtā syāmiti; neti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ, yathaivopakaraṇavatām jīvitam tathaiva te jīvitam syāt, amṛtatvasya tu naśāsti vitteneti.

Word Meanings

sā - that; *Maitreyī* - Maitreyī; *uvāca ha* - said, *bhagoḥ* - venerable sir; *yat* - if; *nu* - indeed; *vittena* - with wealth; *purṇā* - replete; *iyam* - this; *sarvā* - whole; *pṛthivī* - earth; *me* - mine; *syāt* - be; *tena* - through that; *katham* - how; *amṛtā* - immortal; *syām* - shall (I) be; *iti; Yājñavalkyaḥ* - Yājñavalkya; *uvāca ha* - said; *na* - no; *iti; yathā* - as; *eva* - just; *upakaraṇavatām* - of those having (plenty of) materials; *jīvitam* - (is) the life; *tathā* - so; *eva* - exactly; *te* -

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your; *jīvitam* - life; *syāt* - will be; *vitten* - through wealth; *tu* - but; *amṛtatvasya* - of immortality; *āśā* - prospect; *na* - not; *asti* - is; *iti*

At this Maitreyī said: "Even if this whole earth replete with wealth be mine, venerable sir, will it make me immortal?" "No," said Yājñavalkya, "Your life will be exactly like that of people well provided with materials, but there is no prospect of immortality through wealth."

In this mantra the attitude of Maitreyī continues to be what it was when she agreed to marry Yājñavalkya. From the beginning she was bent on realizing the Self. Yājñavalkya's attempt to settle the inheritance of property gives a good occasion for Maitreyī to question the value of riches. We have already seen that Maitreyī is not tied down to marital obligations or desire for a child. Her inheritance of wealth has not yet been effected. Yājñavalkya is only proposing it. This is the opportune time for her to reject that also. That will put her on par with Yājñavalkya; they can be two fresh pilgrims, ready to review whatever they have understood so far as the true meaning of the Self. They can be sharing students in their search for the Self although Yājñavalkya knows, at least theoretically, what the Self is. But whatever he knows and whatever impressions Maitreyī has gathered have all been annulled by the last mantra of the previous *brāhmaṇa* which proposes the philosophical methodology of "not this, not this," *(neti, neti)*. The first "not this" puts both Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī in the position of forgoing all their claims of knowledge. The true investigation begins with the realization of the second "not this." As a corollary to *neti neti* the *Upaniṣad* has very prudently given the secret in a covert dictum *satyasya satyam*, truth of truths. This will be made clear with the questions of Maitreyī and the answers of Yājñavalkya which follow.

Śankara's injunction is to acquire *sādhana catuṣṭaya* before commencing the path of enquiry of *brahman*. In his commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* I.1.1, Śankara says, "The knowledge of active religious duty has for its fruit transitory felicity and that again depends on the performance of religious acts. The enquiry into *brahman*, on the other hand, has for its fruit eternal bliss

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and does not depend on any acts." In the *Brahma Mīmāmsa* the object of enquiry, i.e., *brahman*, is something already accomplished (existent) for it is eternal and does not depend on human energy. The prerequisites for such an enquiry are: 1) discrimination of what is eternal and what is non-eternal *(nityānitya vastu vivekam)*; 2) the renunciation of all desires to enjoy the fruits (of one's actions) both here and in the hereafter *(iha amutraphala bhoga virāga)*; 3) the acquiring of tranquility, self-restraint and the other means which are, in addition to *sama* and *dama*, discontinuance of religious ceremonies, *(uparati)*, patience in suffering *(titikṣa)*, attention and concentration of the mind *(samādhāna)* and faith *(śraddha)*; 4) the desire to obtain final release *(mumukṣutva)*.

In the present situation Maitreyī, with her rhetorical question - "Will wealth make me immortal?" - is referring to the discipline of not desiring any thing in the here or in the hereafter. Śankara's suggestion does not include Sureśvara's *nitya karmādyanuṣṭhāna*. As Maitreyī had been living close to Yājñavalkya and following the training of thought of her master, she must have already noticed his dissatisfaction with the futility of the fruits of *karma*. By asking about the use of wealth, she is only trying to confirm her own conclusion that wealth is not an alternative to the realization of the Self. She purposely exaggerates the magnitude of wealth by qualifying it as the wealth of the whole earth girdled by the oceans. She asks, "If such wealth be mine shall I be immortal through that?" This question evidently shows her willingness to renounce *(vairāgya)* and her ardent desire for liberation *(mumukṣutva)*. In Yājñavalkya's answer we get an exact description of the value of *artha* in the world of *samsāra*. He says, "You can never be immortal; as is the life of people of means, filled with materials of enjoyment, so will your life be; but there is no hope, even in the thought of immortality through wealth, i.e., rites performed through wealth."

Mantra 3

sā hovāca maitreyī, yenāham nāmṛtā syām kimaham tena kuryām? yadeva bhagavānveda tadeva me brūhīti.

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Word Meanings

sā - that; *maitreyī* - Maitreyī; *uvāca ha* - said; *yena* - through which; *aham* - I; *amṛtā* - immortal; *na* - not; *syām* - can be; *tena* - with that; *aham* - I; *kim* - what; *kuryām* - shall do; *yad eva* - whatever; *bhagavān* - your venerable self; *veda* - knows; *tat* - that; *eva* - alone; *me* - me; *brūhi* tell; *iti*

Maitreyī replied: "What shall I do with that through which I cannot be immortal? Tell me, venerable sir, of that alone which you know (to be the means of immortality)."

With this question and her subsequent request Maitreyī combines the two disciplines of not desiring any thing in this world or in the hereafter and affirms her discipline of desiring ultimate liberation. In modern parlance wealth comes under two categories: use value and exchange value. The wealth of use value is that which can be directly consumed. Exchange value has the reflected value which for convenience is normalized as token money or instruments of negotiation such as dollar bills, bank drafts, promissory notes, etc. There are other exchange values like problem-solving ability, mathematical prowess, medical or engineering know-how or expertise in any branch of knowledge, especially these with practical utility.

In Plato's *Dialogues* we read in the *Republic* that wealth can be of advantage in protecting oneself in old age (I.239e). It also speaks of wealth as all-powerful in times of timocracies and oligarchies (8.548a, 551b, 562a). Caution is given that wealth should not be amassed for children. *Laws and Statesman* also says that one should not consider wealth in making marriage alliances (*Laws* 6.773-774c and *Statesman* 310b). The *Republic* holds the view that wealth corrupts the arts. The only advantage of wealth is that it may help to educate one's children. However it is said to be an impediment to virtue. In *Laws* it is said that wealth is the cause of many crimes (9.870a). The *New Testament* says: "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now for ye shall be filled. Blessed are

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ye that weep now for ye shall be comforted. But woe unto you that are rich for you have received your consolation." Jesus also speaks of the need to renounce to enter the Kingdom of God. In Luke 18-23 Jesus says, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast and distribute it unto the poor and thou shalt have treasures in heaven. Come and follow me."

The consequence of the renunciation which Jesus speaks of does not fit in with the Indian concept of *vairāgya*. The stress in the *Upaniṣad* is on a total renunciation of everything that has a name and form and which is likely to induce you to engage in *karma*. The reason for this can be appreciated only if you know the distinction between the Self and the non-Self with which Śankara begins his commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtras*.

Mantra 4

sā hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ, priyā batāre naḥ satī priyam bhāṣase, ehi, āssva, vyākhyāsyāmi te, vyācakṣāṇasya tu me nididhyāsasveti.

Word Meanings

saḥ - that; *yājñavalkyaḥ* - Yājñavalkya; *uvāca ha* - said; *are* my dear; *naḥ* - to me; *priyā* - dear; *bata* -ah; *satī* - having been; *priyam* - (what is) dear (to me); *bhāṣase* - (you) say; *ehi* - come; *āssva* - sit down; *te* - to you; *vyākhyāsyāmi* - (I) shall explain; *vyācakṣāṇasya tu me* - but while I explain (it); *nididhyāsasva* - concentrate (upon it) *iti*

Yājñavalkya said, "Ah, you have (always) been dear to me, my beloved, and now you say what is dear to my heart. Come, sit down, I shall explain it to you. But while I explain it, concentrate upon it."

In the Upaniṣadic context a necessary condition that is to be satisfied is the establishing of a rapport between the guru and

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the disciple. Maitreyī was previously the wife of Yājñavalkya. So we can presume that there was already a bipolarity between them. But it was to sever their marital relationship that Yājñavalkya told Maitreyī that he wanted to settle his properties by giving half to her and half to Kātyāyanī. Whether this has been de facto accomplished or not, he has explicitly said that he is giving up his formal relationship as a husband and going to a higher plane. So their previous relationship is to be treated as having come to a close. In all spiritual discourses between a guru and a disciple a special stress is made on a feeling of endearment between them. In the opening verse of the ninth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gīta* we read as follows: "Kṛṣṇa said: 'To you indeed who do not mistrust I shall declare this profound secret of wisdom together with its applied aspects, by knowing which you shall be freed from what savours of evil'." Kṛṣṇa describes Arjuna's state as that of having no *asūya*. *Asūya* is a state of jealousy or disadoption that can disrupt the intimacy of two people. It is customary in India that when a guru and disciple sit together to have an important intercourse, they will both recite an invocation to assure their bipolarity. The prayer is somewhat like this:

Let us together be protected.
Let us together enjoy the outcome of our enterprise.
Let us both be nourished by the spiritual energy
that comes from our endeavor.
Let us both shine forth with the effulgence
of the ensuing spirit.
Let not any discordance ever come between us.

In verse thirty-four of Chapter Nine of the *Bhagavad Gīta* we read, "Become One with Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice to Me; bow down to Me; unifying thus yourself you shall surely come to me, your supreme goal none other than Me." In verse sixty-five of Chapter Eighteen the same verse is repeated with a slight change in the last line which says, "I promise you (in) truth you are dear to Me." In verse sixty-six Kṛṣṇa explicitly advises Arjuna to make an absolute renunciation: "Abandoning all duties, come to Me, the One, for refuge; I shall absolve you of all sins; do not despair." There can be two possible relationships of intimacy. One is horizontal and the other is vertical. Most worldly relation-

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ships primarily have a horizontal bipolarity but the relationship between a guru and a disciple is of vertical bipolarity. In the present mantra, after the horizontal relationship of husband and wife between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī has been discontinued, Yājñavalkya himself openly says that Maitreyī has now become dear by choosing the path of wisdom and he invites her to come closer and sit beside him. This act itself literally illustrates the Upaniṣadic context to which they belong. *Upaniṣad* means to sit close, giving full attention, so that the guru can clearly show the otherwise mysterious truth of the Absolute. This is exactly how Kṛṣṇa also, very endearingly assures Arjuna that he will teach the utmost secret of *brahmavidyā* to him in full measure. Yājñavalkya says: "You have always been dear to me, my beloved, and now you say what is dear to my heart. Come sit down. I shall explain it to you."

This is followed by the famous clarification of the nature of the Absolute which Yājñavalkya gives to Maitreyī. Before this teaching is given, the guru specially instructs her to concentrate upon every word he is imparting. *Śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* are the three disciplines which aid one to go deep into the essence of a guru's instruction *(gurupadeśa)*. Although this direction is given to Maitreyī, as students of *brahmavidyā*, we also should meditate on each word with deep faith and attention.

Mantra 5

sa hovāca, na vā are patyuḥ kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati. na vā are jāyāyai kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya jāyā priya bhavati. na vā are putrāṇām kāmāya putrāḥ priyā bhavanti, ātmanastu kāmāya putrāḥ priyā bhavanti. na vā are vittasya kāmāya vittam priyam bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya vittam priyam bhavati. na vā are brahmaṇaḥ kāmāya brahma priyam bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya brahma priyam bhavati. na vā are kṣatrasya kāmāya kṣatram priyam bhavati, ātmanastu kāmāya kṣatram priyam bhavati. na va are lokānām kāmāya lokāḥ priyā bhavanti, ātmanastu kāmāya lokāḥ priyā bhavanti. na vā are devānām kāmāya devāḥ priyā bhavanti, ātmanastu kāmāya devāḥ priyā bhavanti. na vā are bhūtānām

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kāmāya bhūtāni priyāṇi bhavanti. ātmanastu kāmāya bhūtāni priyāṇi bhavanti. na vā are sarvasya kāmām sarvam priyam bhavati. ātmanastu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati. ātmā vā are drṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyi. ātmano vā are darśanena śravaṇena matyā vijñānenedam sarvam viditam.

Word Meanings

saḥ - he; *uvāca ha* - said; *are* - my dear; *patyuḥ* - of the husband; *kāmāya* - for the sake (need); *patiḥ* - the husband; *priyaḥ* - dear; *na* - not; *bhavati* - is; *vai* - verily; *ātmanaḥ* - of (the wife's) own Self; *tu* - but; *kāmāya* - for the sake; *patiḥ* - the husband; *priyaḥ* - dear; *bhavati* - is; *jāyāyai* - of the wife; *jāyā* - the wife; *putrāṇām* - of children; *putrāḥ* - children; *vittasya* - of wealth; *vittam* - wealth; *brāhmaṇaḥ* - of the *brāhmaṇa; brahma* - the *brāhmaṇa; kṣatrasya* - of the *kṣatriya; kṣatram* - the *kṣatriya; lokānām* of the worlds; *lokāḥ* - worlds; *devānām* - of the gods; *devāḥ* - gods; *bhūtānām* - of beings; *bhūtāni* - beings; *sarvasya* - of all; *sarvam* - all; (the rest is similar) *are* - my dear; *maitreyī* - Maitreyī; *ātmā* - the Self; *vai* - verily; *drṣṭavyaḥ* - should be realized; *śrotavyaḥ* - should be heard of; *mantavyaḥ* - should be reflected on; *nididhyāsitavyaḥ* - should be meditated upon; *are* - my dear; *śravaṇena* - through hearing; *matyā* - through reflection; *vijñānena* - (and) through meditation; *ātmanaḥ* - of the Self; *vai* - alone; *darśanena* - by the realization; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *viditam* - (is) known

Yājñavalkya said: "Verily the husband is dear (to the wife) not for the sake of the husband, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that the husband is dear. Verily the wife is dear (to the husband) not for the sake of the wife, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that she is dear. Verily children are dear (to parents) not for the sake of the children, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self children are dear. Verily wealth is dear not for the sake of wealth, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self

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that it is dear. Verily the *brāhmaṇa* is dear not for the sake of the *brāhmaṇa*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self the *brāhmaṇa* is dear. Verily the *kṣatriya* is dear not for the sake of the *kṣatriya*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that the *kṣatriya* is dear. Verily worlds are dear not for the sake of worlds, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily the *devas* are dear not for the sake of the *devas*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily *bhūta* (beings) are dear not for the sake of the beings, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily all is dear not for the sake of all, my dear, but for the sake of the Self all is dear. The Self *(ātman)*, my dear Maitreyī, should verily be realized: should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. *Ātman* is that which is heard, reflected on and meditated upon.

Two key words in this mantra are *ātma* and *kāma*. We should remember that within the *Upaniṣad* these two words have a history of connotation which has been growing from the first chapter. We began with a negative ground of nothingness which was affirmed to have existence. Thus the first meaning given for the Self was something having an autonomous right to exist even when its existence had no visibility, tangibility or objectivity. At the same time, it had no reference to subjectivity either. We commenced with a neutral silence which had in it the potential to become both subjectivity and objectivity. The first reference to subjectivity was fear and to objectivity was death. Thus the Self was presented to us as fear when subjectively conceived and as death when objectively interpreted. It is fear that transforms into an operational function of a problem-solving entity termed as *manas* or mind. When the mind was confronted by necessity, it was projected as *vaiśvānara*, universal hunger. This need was balanced with the hope of finding fuel to meet hunger in the form of *prajāpati*. So the first comprehensive idea of the Self we were given was *hiraṇyagarbha*, the pregnant possibility before the mind that struggles to find an answer. The Self was seen as a tribasic reality of an overall possibility containing within it hunger and food in which hunger is identical with death and food is identical with life.

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Hiraṇyagarbha was presented as the *epoche* that comes as the opening and closing bracket which includes in it *prajāpati* and *vaiśvānara*. When that evolved into a *prajāpati* with a mind, the proliferation of the *ātman* brought along with it the elements of creation and the pulsating life breath *(prāṇa)*. Then the *hiraṇyagarbha* was not distinguished from *prajāpati;* the positive and negative aspects were introjected into the *prajāpati* as the shining principle and the inertial dark force. Thereafter *ātman* was not a noun, but a verb of continuous struggle between the *vaiśvānara* and *prajāpati*, not as external forces but as internal dialectical polarities which in one moment are at polemics and, in the next, at dialectical interplay.

Then came the story of how the *prāṇa* in the mouth *(ayāsya)* and the essence of the limbs *(aṅgirasa)* pushed death away so that the individuated being gained a span of life to be within the corporeality of its body. The Self receded into the shadow of physical reality while at the same time it functions on a continuous basis in the heavens as the cosmos and in living organisms as the continuing thread of life which passes through the beads of fresh bodies. It also operates at a more subtle depth where a seeded cause expands into a cycle of life in the space-time continuum in which alternative phases manifest in the gross body as a plethora of effects, and as a causal principle, which disappears again and again into the principle of transcendence. We have seen how, through *manu* and *śatarūpa*, this game was going on.

With the sun in the firmament, air in the atmosphere and fire in the elemental world, the Self *(ātman)* has been functioning non-stop. It is the intention of that Self to continue on and on, assuming forms of all sorts and shapes of all functional conveniences. Some of the major roles that come on the way are enumerated in this mantra with the symbols of the husband, the wife, the child, the world, the shining principles, the physicality of being, knowledge (represented by *brāhmaṇa)*, action (represented by *kṣatriya)*, etc. All through, the Self is one intentionality taking advantage of the appropriate instrumentality which is relevant in each context. Thus the Yājñavalkya who teaches and the Maitreyī who receives the lesson are only aspects of the Self. The Self on one side is a cogitative factor and, on the other, a cognitive and connative function. What is implied in this subtle appraisal will become clearer as we pass through Yājñavalkya's further elucidation.

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Mantra 6

brahma tam parādādyo'nyatrātmano brahma veda, kṣatram tam parādādyo'nyatrātmanaḥ kṣatram veda, lokāstam parāduryo'nyatrātmano lokān veda, devāstam parāduryo'nyatrātmano devān veda, bhūtānī tam parāduryo'nyatrātmano bhūtānī veda, sarvam tam parādādyo'nyatrātmanaḥ sarvam veda; idam brahma, idam kṣatram ime lokāḥ ime devāḥ imānī bhūtānī, idam sarvam yadayamātmā.

Word Meanings

brahma - the *brāhmaṇa; tam* - one; *parādāt* - rejects; *yaḥ* - who; *brahma* - the *brāhmaṇa; ātmanaḥ* - from the Self; *anyatra* - different; *veda* - knows; *parāduḥ* - reject; (Rest is similar); *idam* - this; *brahma* - *brāhmaṇa; idam kṣatram* - *kṣatriya; ime* - these; *lokāḥ* - worlds; *ime devāḥ* - gods; *imānī* - these; *bhūtānī* - beings; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *yat* - (are) that; *ayam* - which (is) this; *ātmā* - Self

The *brāhmaṇa* rejects one who knows the *brāhmaṇa* to be different from the Self. The *kṣatriya* rejects one who knows the *kṣatriya* to be different from the Self. Worlds reject one who knows worlds to be different from the Self. The gods reject one who knows the gods to be different from the Self. Beings reject one who knows beings to be different from the Self. All reject one who knows all to be different from the Self. This *brāhmaṇa*, this *kṣatriya*, these worlds, these gods, these beings and this all are only the Self.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, there is a chapter devoted to the field of event *(kṣetra)* and the knower of the field of event *(kṣetrajña)*. The act of knowing leads also to the act of relating oneself with one's knowledge. In the simplest form of cognition, the inner tranquillity of consciousness is disturbed by the calling of attention to the presentation of a here and now situation which is rec-

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ognized as "this." On coming to sense that there is a contingency to cognize, the inner organ becomes vigilant and asks the question, "What is this?" It is with such a question that every item of cognition is commenced. The inner organ, particularly the interrogating faculty which is technically called mind, relates itself with the sensory system to gather perceptual data of whatever is presented to the knower or the seer.

It is here the individual has the option to see or not to see, deciding whether or not to remain an instrument of the individuated self and apply its sensory measuring matrix for an appraisal of a delimited field of vision. When the senses are equipped with energy to relate with the object of interest, the external time-space continuum is brought to the internal mechanism of cognition for the psychological purpose of processing an experiential evaluation of what is presented. After the plethora of stimuli coming into the central nervous system is reduced, a selected and delimited focus of enquiry is instituted and the area of vision is placed on the greater canvas of the unexamined field. This is like a news insert in a magazine or newspaper.

Then a concentrated enquiry is pressed into service. The transactional norms of the physical world, subjected to mathematically standardized metrics of physics, chemistry and physiology, are maintained. A clear distinction is drawn between the ground of enquiry *(śreya)* and the application of the logistics of enquiry approved by mathematical logic. Thus, for all practical purposes, there is a validation of pragmatic testimony. In that field we have a number of choices where the general pattern is the same. For instance, we have the cosmologic world of extensive space in which countless trillions of heavenly bodies are continuously moving, yet it has in it an unchanging law that can be astronomically depended on to keep our investigating minds open to the field. We have our own solar system with its fascinating planetary variegations in which each planet has its own characteristics and movements. If we are interested in it, it is there. Then we have our own terrestrial field with its geographic and historical mysteries to investigate. Although we do not know its beginning or its end, certain working hypotheses have already been arrived at by which we can correctly predict high tides and low tides, eclipses of the sun and the moon and atmospheric conditions. We can also turn to a closer area of interest such as the country where we live, our physical location and its environmen-

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tal factors and social systems. Then we can move into a psychologically more interesting field such as our interpersonal relationships within the family or the society of which the family is a member. We can bring ourselves to a highly specialized area such as the cooking and eating of our food, or taking a lesson on the piano or the guitar, or doing an art work.

In all these varieties of fields it is imperative for us to relate ourselves with our objects of interest. When we close down the shutters on any item it is as if that item is cut off from us. Each item one shows interest in is like opening a window of perception into the details of one's own self. Alienating an object has the counter-effect of that object becoming alienated from oneself also. The scope of one's life interest becomes more and more reduced as one gives up items of interest. Most people think renunciation means refusing to accept the empirical reality of wakeful life. This mantra clearly shows what a fallacious view that is.

In the wakeful world, there are three areas of specific interest. The first is familiarization with all items by recognizing the differences in forms and assigning names to every form. That entails an analytical fragmentation of the world presented to us. In the modern world one tends to specialize until one insulates oneself within a highly mechanized world of name and form. While seeing the scheme of things and positions of items in the world of objectivity, you can also have a synthetic vision of the whole in which you know where you are yet you are not devoured by the world. Another area of interest is that of communication where you can put yourself in the position of a silent observer, making no comment, or you can be like a sports commentator, jumping at every issue, giving your verbal reaction to whatever you notice. Most communications which come to a person are uncritically made by people of little understanding. One does not lose much by paying no heed to non-authoritative pronouncements. This field also includes newspapers, published books and periodicals, radio and television broadcasts and the enormous quantity of propaganda and advertisements.

In this world of wakeful encounters, a wise person has to use discretion in formulating a hierarchy of transactional values with a view to relating oneself to one's society with the least amount of social distraction. The third and most hazardous arena is that of action. Individuals as well as masses of people feel compelled to enter into activities by the sheer presence of situations which are

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not clearly examined or critically studied. It is in this field that the *Upaniṣad* cautions us to minimize our activities with the intention of having a vision of life whose transparency is not vitiated by undesirable motivations.

All these belong to the consciousness of the wakeful which has in it a four-fold division of the gross *(sthūla)* and the subtle *(sūkṣma)*, the general *(sāmānya)* and the specific *(viśeṣa)*. People who have superficial moorings may be impressed by the gross without understanding its subtle implications. Similarly, one who is impressed by the specific may mistakenly think that it is a rule for the general. Being in relation with the manifested world of the wakeful presents many snares and complications. This necessitates having safe guides and a code of conduct to safeguard us from getting into social confusions or self-deluding temptations.

The second large field of awareness is of the dream *(svapna bhāna)*. The external world of gross details is like the tip of the iceberg seen above water level. The gross world is only a materialization of innumerable ideas ranging from the most hallucinative phantasmagoria to social conventions, taboos and even religious convictions. People suffer more from their dreams and subjective ideas or mental disorientation and diseases than from the physical order of the wakeful world. In the dream there are objectified dream images which can act with the same force as the gross objects of the wakeful world. In the dream world also there are the gross and the subtle, the specific and the universal. Recurring dreams and archetypal symbols lying dormant in the unconscious can have great pathological impact in distorting the inner personality of a person to such an extent that the person can be pushed to the edge of a split personality. One has to choose ideas and ideals which will prompt one to be more often on the sunny side of images rather than falling into the mythical depth of psychic tragedies which can haunt a person again and again in nightmares. Such is the world of *svapna bhāna*.

As most people live oblivious of the in-built dynamics of their unconscious, more than half the population of the world lives in darkness with regard to the psycho-dynamics of their unknown self. Problems dealing with it are touched upon by C.G. Jung in his famous book, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. In Joseph Campbell's *The Power of Myth*, he also draws our attention to many of the unconscious factors covered by causal consciousness

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(kāraṇa bhāna). Only one in a million even recognizes the need to make a deep probe into the totality of one's self which is in unition with the universal Self.

These are some of the implications of the present mantra we should be aware of so that in the name of Self-realization we will not reduce ourselves to ignoramus persons devoid of all insight and incapable of charting our own personal futures to make life the most successful adventure of spirit.

Mantra 7

sa yathā dundubherhanyamānasya na bāhyāñchabdāñchaknuyādgrahaṇāya, dundubhestu grahṇena - dundubhyāghātasya vā - śabdo gṛhītaḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ yathā - as; *hanyamānasya* - that is beaten; *dundubheḥ* - of a drum; *bāhyān śabdān* - particular notes; *grahaṇāya* - to grasp; *na* - not; *śaknuyāt* - (one) is able; *dundubheḥ* - of the (general note of the) drum; *tu* - only; *dundubhi-āghātsya* of the (general effect of the) strokes on the drum; *vā* - or; *grahṇena* - by the grasping (knowledge); *śabdah* - the particular note; *gṛhītaḥ* - (is) grasped

As one is not able to grasp by themselves the particular notes of a drum that is being beaten, but it is only by grasping the general note of the drum, or the general effect of particular strokes on it, that those notes are grasped.

Mantra 8

sa yathā śaṅkhasya dhmāyamānasya na bāhyāñchabdāñchaknuyādgrahaṇāya, śaṅkhasya tu grahaṇena - śaṅkhadhmasya vā - śabdo gṛhītaḥ.

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Word Meanings

dhmāyamānasya - that is blown; *śaṅkhasya* - of the conch; *śaṅkhasya* - of the (general note of the) conch; *śaṅkhadhmasya* - of the (general effect of the) blowing on the conch; (Rest is similar.)

As one is not able to grasp by themselves the particular notes of a conch that is being blown, but it is only by grasping the general note of the conch, or the general effect of particular blowing on it, that those notes are grasped.

Mantra 9

sa yathā vīṇāyai vādyamānāyai na bāhyāñchabdāñchaknuyādgrahaṇāya, vīṇāyai tu grahaṇena - vīṇāvādasya vā - śabdo gṛhītaḥ.

Word Meanings

vādyamānāyai (vādyamānāyāḥ) - that is played; *vīṇāyai (vīṇāyāḥ)* - of the lute; *vīṇāyai* - of the (general note of the) lute; *vīṇāvādasya* - of the (general effect of the) playing on the lute; (Rest is similar.)

As one is not able to grasp by themselves the particular notes of a lute that is being played on, but it is only by grasping the general note of the lute, or the general effect of particular playings on it, that those notes are grasped.

In mantras seven, eight and nine a phenomena that is considered to be of space-filling acoustics is given to show how the Self is having an indivisible relationship with everything. In the Indian context this is called *nādabrahma*. Although the ordinary sound which we hear with our ears is audible only when the impact of the sound waves is of a certain pitch and frequency, there are devices by which the faintest voice can be converted into a ra-

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dio wave that can encircle the whole globe. One of the very first encounters with which Maitreyī began her philosophical acquaintance with Yājñavalkya was his furnishing of an answer to her question about *sūtrātma*. He emphasized the contiguity of the relationship between cause and effect in the world of thought, revealing the Self as a homogeneous continuity in the reverberation of thoughts. Here the rishi resorts to a similar example, taking sound as an all-filling reality that has two poles of reference - the ground of sound *(śabda āśraya)* and the audition of sound *(śabda bhāna)*. *Śabda bhāna* parallels the *bhāna* of the visual order by which the form of a visual object is transferred to the faculty of vision and transformed into an imperiential certitude of vision. In the cosmos, in the atmospheric sky, in Gaia, the living earth, and in the oceanic immensity, there are common elements which affect all the bodies and beings that are placed in these fields.

We have already seen in the previous mantra how the entire world stands in relation to the field and its knower. The specific aspect of the knowledge of a delimited field forming a part of the sensory perception and cognitive appraisal has already been explained in terms of the modality of perception *(bhānavṛttī)*. We have also examined it as implied in the principle of superimposition *(adhyāsa)*. It is into this field we have to bring the four-fold divisions of *bhāna* given by Narayana Guru in his *Darśana Mālā* as the gross, the subtle, the generic and the specific. In these three mantras the rishi calls our attention to the relation between the generic and the specific. Even the mistaken identity of nescience has generic and specific aspects, *māyā* and *avidyā*.

The first example taken here is of the sounding of a drum. In modern engineering a deep study has been made of the acoustic environment which ranges from the loud blast of an airplane engine to the rustle of leaves. In such detailed studies all specific sounds or noises are measured and dealt with in terms of the general. Managing the acoustic environment is mainly to assure good hearing conditions. Even in the days of Socrates and Plato, there were open amphitheaters with seating both on level ground and on the sloping sides in which the sound was accurately conveyed to even the farthest seat so the audience could have full response to every song that was sung, oration that was made and the faintest whispers of the dramatic performances. In modern days, when audio-visual performance of art has taken over the

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main cultural nourishment of the human race, the entire world is connected with amplified sound systems.

The three sound-producing devices mentioned here are a percussion instrument, string instrument and wind instrument. For quite a long time the melodious music of one country was a cacophony to audiences in another country. Now with the realization of the musical unity of the soul, musical exchange and participation has become of the order of the day between the East and the West, the North and the South. It is as if the entire populace of the world audience is having one mind to hear and one soul to appreciate. In operatic music and large scale symphonies, the octave has within it so many sound combinations that each specific sound is like a drop of water in an oceanic extravagance. Narayana Guru notes this as a mathematical equation to be understood when the individual is compared with the totality of being. In Guru's *Universal Prayer* he gives these verses:

As ocean, wave, wind and depth,
let us within see the scheme
of us, nescience, Your glory and You.

You are the act of creation, the creator
and the myriad variety of what is created;
O God, are You not the very stuff
of which everything is created?

From Vedic times, Indians have looked at the unity of sound as well as the modes of musical affinity. We have previously referred to the concepts of *śruti*, *rāga* and *candas*. In fact the basis of every meaningful intonation stands in relation with the generic aspect of sound. Both the Vedic rishis and Pythagoras in the West considered sound as a phenomena which on one side has the distinctive features of physical elements that participate in making sounds and, on the other side, the very Self of all. Agreeing with Pythagoras, Plato also said that "perfect music is a compound of voices and instrumental harmony. The voice alone is more perfect than instruments alone, but it wants one thing to complete its perfection and that one thing is harmony." It seems Pythagoras learned this from Homer who had a preference for the lyre. In the Greek icons, Minerva always appears with a lyre.

According to India's ancient tradition all the basic sounds of

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the alphabet came from the little drum *(damaru)* of Śiva. The twist and twirl of it produced the sounds *ka ca ṭa ta pa ma ya ra la va śa ṣa sa ha.* The most ancient of musical instruments used anywhere in the world is the drum. In the *Larousse Encyclopedia of Music* it says: "One may reasonably assume that one cause of the drum's extensive distribution is the role it plays in communications. The carrying power of these instruments is considerable, and as a link between communities often separated by tracts of forest or bushland their value is obvious." 30 According to the Indian concept, sound is the property of space *(ākāśa).* It fills the entire cosmos and even the hollow of the heart of the listener.

The two main elements in music are melody and harmony. Even the man with the crudest of minds has a musical ear to make his innermost being resonate with melody which has the quality of flowing sound, either in an ascending manner or descending manner. On one side there is the ever-changing, ever-flowing, ever-transient phenomena of the world already described as gross, factual and mortal. At the same time, in and through that there persists the beauty and joy of music which harmonizes the many into one.

Thus the examples given here of the drum, the lyre and the conch shell make a heart-touching experiential illustration for us to go into the deeper strata of consciousness to which music can take us. It shows us that an arbitrary renunciation and denial of this world is neither a healthy attitude nor a feasible one. Phenomenal aspects can be taken advantage of to arrive at the unity of things especially in the sphere of ecstatic and blissful rejoicings in the unifying power of music. Pythagoras believed that the structure and composition of the world is essentially musical. India's great books ranging from the *Sāma Veda* to the works of Nārada, Kāhala and more modern writers like Sāraṅga Deva all present the Self as the purest basis of musical sound.

Mantra 10

sa yathārdraidhāgnerabhyāhitātpṛthagdhūmā viniścaranti, evam vā are'sya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam-etadyadṛgvedo yajur vedaḥ sāmavedo'tharvāṅgirasa itihāsaḥ purāṇam vidyā upaniṣadaḥ ślokāḥ sūtrāṇyanuvyākhyānāni vyākhyānāni; asyaivaitāni niśvasitāni.

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Word Meanings

saḥ yathā - as; *abhyāhitāt* - kindled; *ārdra-edha-agneḥ* - from a fire with damp fuel; *pṛthak-dhūmāḥ* - various kinds of smoke; *viniścaranti* - proceed; *evam vai* - even so; *are* - my dear; *yat* - which; *ṛgvedaḥ* - *Ṛg Veda; yajurvedaḥ* - *Yajur Veda; sāmavedaḥ* - *Sāma Veda; atharvāṅgirasaḥ* - *Atharva Veda; itihāsaḥ* - history; *purāṇam* - mythology; *vidyāḥ* - arts; *upaniṣadaḥ* - *Upaniṣads; ślokāḥ* - verses; *sūtrāṇi* - aphorisms; *anuvyākhyānāni* - elucidations; *vyākhyānāni* - (and) explanations; *etat* - all this; *asya* - this; *mahataḥ* - limitless; *bhūtasya* - of Reality; *niśvasitam* - (is) the breath; *etāni* - they; *asya* - of it; *eva* - alone; *niśvasitāni* (are) breaths

As various kinds of smoke proceed from a fire kindled with damp fuel, even so, my dear (Maitreyī), the *Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda, Atharva Veda,* history, mythology, arts, *Upaniṣads,* verses, aphorisms, elucidations and explanations are the breath (as it were) of this limitless Reality. They are (like) the breath of it alone.

In Chapter Seven, 1.2. of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* Nārada tells Sanatkumāra that he studied *Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda, Atharvana, Itihāsa* (epics), *Purāṇa* (legends), *Vyākaraṇa* (Grammar), *Pitṛyam* (Eschatology), *Deva Śāstram* (Theology), *Devavidyā* (Rhetorics), *Brahmavidyā* (Philology, Etymology etc.), *Bhūtavidyā* (Study of Elements), *Kṣatravidyā* (Study of Warfare), *Nakṣatra Vidyā* (Astrology), *Sarpavidyā* (Study of Snakes). In the next mantra he grieves that he knows only the verbal presentation of all these and has not realized his Self. The assurance of the *Upaniṣad* is that one crosses over the sorrow of this world by realizing the Self. A similar narration is given here in which Yājñavalkya says to Maitreyī that when fire is kindled with wet faggots, diverse kinds of smoke coupled with sparks burn in different directions. He compares the different smoke formations to the four *Vedas,* history, mythology, arts, *Upaniṣads,* aphorisms, elucidations and explanations. One may wonder why all these books of great wisdom are compared to smoky flames coming from the burning of wet faggots. Anything presented in the world

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is likely to be afflicted with the characteristics of nature, *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. The Indian people have high appreciation for the *Vedas* and revere them as sacred. Nevertheless, in the *Bhagavad Gīta* Kṛṣṇa says, "O Arjuna, these *Vedas* are of the three *guṇas*. You transcend and go beyond the *Vedas*." There is a difference between realization and punditry. Yājñavalkya himself was very erudite and able to answer all the questions posed to him by great scholars in the scriptures. But here he notes that when these are only understood intellectually, that is not on par with the realization of the Self.

The reference here to wet faggots is very significant. The Jain tradition of India dates back beyond the Vedic culture. The last of the *Tīrthankaras*, Vartamāna Mahāvira, was a contemporary of Gautama Buddha. He was the twenty-fourth *Tīrthankara*. So presumably Ṛṣabhadeva, the first *Tīrthankara*, must have been a pre-Vedic or even pre-historic person. The Jains think of wetness as a symbol of being soaked in *karma*. The purging of karmic tendencies in a person is like evaporating away the wetness that bogs down the Self *(ātman)* to the terrestrial plane, particularly in one's body consciousness. The Jains suggest a binary method for realization. One half is purgation through exposing oneself to rigorous penance and ascetic discipline. The other half is not allowing any urge to act to come from entertaining any desires of any sort. That is *nirodha* which prevents the Self from becoming polluted by *karma* at all. The example they take is of a mass of cotton wool which is soaked in water. It is very heavy and lies clinging to the ground, unable to ascend. When the water particles in it are dried away the fibers of the fabric become freer and looser. Ultimately, when there is no more moisture, the fibers are free to ascend and expand to fill the whole universe. That is the omnipresence which the Jain speaks of.

The various Indian books of wisdom cited here have all been polluted with the vested interests of individuals who used wisdom as a device for obtaining a certain state of pleasure or happiness; to that extent a hedonistic motivation can be attributed to all of them. That is why Yājñavalkya was bent on insisting that he should make a clean break with everything in which he had been engaged. Śankara also, in one of his invocations, makes an ardent prayer that he never be fated to be the head of a religious institution *(maṭhādhipatyam)* nor to be a vagrant walking in the night looking for pleasures in brothels. One may wonder why a

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teacher of great wisdom was apprehensive that such a fate would come to him. Nobody can predict the course of a human mind. In the *Imitation of Christ*, Thomas a Kempis says, "Lord, if I have not fallen so far, it was not by my strength but by your compassionate protection."

The examples of smoke and sparks are very significant. All manifestations in the phenomenal world have two opposite phases. One is of the self-luminous light of the spirit and the other of the inertial non-luminosity of inert matter. The best example of this is a spark. It is a particle of matter which has no light of its own yet it bears within it a thermal glow of fire. It is visible only as long as the fire in it continues to glow. When the glow is gone, it turns into dust. Then once again it becomes part of the terrestrial soil. The human body is very much like a spark or burning candle. It is a combustible mass of inertial matter but when it burns, there is a glow. A number of examples are given here. The first references are to the *Vedas*. Even great writers and critics like Max Muller, George Thibaut and Paul Deussen agree that the Vedic literature has no motivation for spiritual enlightenment. It is replete with hedonistic motivations to enjoy life on earth to the maximum. The highest motivation of the Vedists was to enjoy the pleasures of a hypothetical *svarga*. This is in sharp contrast with the Upaniṣadic motivation of crossing over the ocean of *saṁsāra* and transcending the duality of both pain and pleasure. That is why the *Vedas* are described here as being of smoky wisdom. In fact, most religions of the world go only to the extent the *Vedas* have gone in dreaming of the goal of life. This is exemplified by Dante's *Divine Comedy* in which the ultimate goal is Paradise.

After the *Vedas* comes the period of magic which is exemplified by the *Purāṇa*, the mythology of India. Śankara's commentary makes a special reference to Urvaśī. She is a symbol of a great magical feat done by the rishi called Narayana. When Narayana entered into a purificatory penance of the most rigorous kind, the god of the heavens, Indra, sent the most beautiful celestial girls to tempt him by singing and dancing before him. Seeing the cunning and treachery of Indra, the rishi Narayana slapped his thigh and from it sprang up the greatest physical beauty. She was then named Urvaśī because she came from the thigh *(ūru)* of the rishi. Many people of this world are dissuaded from seeking truth by becoming enchanted with *siddhis*. They

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are blinded by so-called unnatural, para-psychological or paranormal phenomena. One has to totally break oneself away from the promises of magic. Patāñjali also attempted to turn people away from all the psychic attainments *(yoga siddhis)* given in the *Vibhūti Pāda* of his *Yoga Sūtras*.

The chronicles of India, which were mainly written to glorify the ruling dynasties, exaggerate human vanities and have provided sufficient scope for whatever people of vested interests wanted to interpolate into them. A classical example of this is the *Mahābhārata*. When it was first composed by Vyāsa it was called *Jaya* and had only 8000 verses. Then it swelled into a chronicle of 24,000 verses. Over a period of a thousand years the song of *Mahābhārata* has grown into an epic of 100,000 verses. Everything in the old scriptures was not useless or fallacious. That is hinted at by the reference to the *Upaniṣads*, the great dictums and mantras and *sūtras* which can be taken as basic spiritual guides. But to enter into the heart of these cryptic wisdom dicta one has to discipline oneself. This has been made difficult by the interpretations attempted by small minds given here as information about things *(anuvyākhyāna)* and elucidations of inexplicable statements *(vyākhyānāni)*.

However, just like we continuously breathe air with our respiratory systems, autonomous knowledge is mostly seeping into our individuated systems. Hence it is said, whatever the exact structure and content of a thing may be, it is made conceivable to us with the use of names. Hence name *(nāma)* is considered to be a modulatory factor *(vikāra sambandha)* of the figure of an embodied thing. The entire universe with its history of several epochs has within it a cumulative history of systems supporting systems. They are to be seen as the bubbles of froth caused by the splash of a wave. We cannot say whether a bubble exists or not. It exists until it bursts. It is sure to burst. Until then it is real. This two-fold aspect which Śankara called *māyā* is of the nature of *sat asatvllakṣaṇa* (having the characteristic of being true and untrue). Just as the body breathes, the individuated self breathes in formations of modes and their subsequent disappearance. Even when an apprehended experience vanishes, the ghost of idempotency will be left like the smile of the Cheshire cat. This world has come from the unformulated potential of imagery which we call *prājña*. That is why in the *Māṇḍūkya Upniṣad* it is said that *suṣupti* is indicative of *prājña* whose face

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is in all directions *(sarvato mukha)*, and which has the ability to contrive and keep images persisting *(eṣa sarveśvara)*. A re-absorption of the magic of phenomena into the *prājña* does not warrant us to say that what was, is gone, and what is gone will not return. In and through all the changes it brings, *prājña* is always there. Hence *prājña* is one and it is the Absolute. This is boldly stated in the Upaniṣadic dictum *prajñānam brahma*. At the same time *nāma*, *rūpa* and *karma* are as unreal as the horns of the hare. *Brahman* alone is. It is *prajñānaghanam* and *eka rasa* that is through and through formulating and unformulating consciousness, having only one *rasa*, the *rasa* of *ānanda*.

Mantra 11

sa yathā sarvāsāmapām samudra ekāyanam, evam sarveṣām sparśānām tvagekāyanam, evam sarveṣām gandhānām nāsike ekāyanam, evam sarveṣām rasānām jihvaikāyanam, evam sarveṣām rūpāṇām cakṣurekāyanam, evam sarveṣām śabdānām śrotramekāyanam, evam sarveṣām saṅkalpānām mana ekāyanam, evam sarvāsām vidyānām hṛdayamekāyanam, evam sarveṣām karmaṇām hastāvekāyanam, evam sarveṣāmānandānāmupastha ekāyanam, evam sarveṣām visargāṇām pāyurekāyanam, evam sarveṣāmadhvanām pādāvekāyanam, evam sarveṣām vedānām vāgekāyanam.

Word Meanings

saḥ yathā - as; *sarvāsām apām* - of all water; *samudraḥ* - the sea; *eka-ayanam* - (is) the one merging place; *evam* - similarly; *sarveṣām* - all; *sparśānām* - of touch; *tvak* - the skin (touch in general); *gandhānām* - of odors; *nāsike* - the nostrils (odor in general); *rasānām* - of savors; *jihvā* the tongue (taste in general); *rūpāṇām* - of forms; *cakṣuḥ* the eye; *śabdānām* - of sounds; *śrotram* - the ear (sound in general); *saṅkalpānām* - of deliberations; *manaḥ* - the mind; *vidyānām* - of knowledge; *hṛdayam* - the heart, intellect; *karmaṇām* - of activities; *hastau* - the hands;

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ānandānām - of pleasure; *upasthaḥ* - the organ of generation; *visargāṇām* - of excretions; *pāyuḥ* - the anus; *adhvanām* - of walking; *pādau* - the feet; *vedānām* - of the *Vedas*; *vāk* - the organ of speech ;(Rest is similar.)

As the sea is the one merging place of all sorts of water, as the skin is the one merging place of all kinds of touch, as the nostrils are the one merging place of all odors, as the tongue is the one merging place of all savors, as the eye is the one merging place of all forms, as the ear is the one merging place of all sounds, as the mind is the one merging place of all deliberations, as the intellect is the one merging place of all kinds of knowledge, as the hands are the one merging place of all actions, as the organ of generation is the one merging place of all pleasures, as the anus is the one merging place of all excretions, as the feet are the one merging place of all kinds of walking, as the organ of speech is the one merging place of all *Vedas*.

Narayana Guru's *Renunciation of the Senses, (Indriya Vairāgyam)* is a wonderful elaboration of this mantra:

Quelling all vibratory functions of space, may you enter into my heart of all-embracing consciousness so that myriad forms of becoming are forgotten. The vagrant of my ear is wandering listlessly, listening to this and that and that and he is not tired of it. But I am filled with the rubbish that he gathers.

What do these eyes care? They are hungering after forms as if they are a bottomless pit that will never be filled. This time it is a color that attracts, next time a shape, another time a comely form. They gather all these images only to fill the well of my mind with the accumulation of their spoils.

This time a touch, next time a kiss, then a fondling. My skin is infatuated with every touch and every rapture that is possible. It loves the cool; it loves the warm. It looks for the soft and then for the rugged. Where is the end of the insinuation of this skin? The itch that it puts

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into the mind and its memory is never tired of creating one device after another.

You are so compassionate to feed us and to quench our thirst every day. From the earth to the sky something is always shimmering and calling us to feast on its brilliance. As for you, you have gone to the oblivion beyond the ashes. It is no wonder that the munching teeth are said to be carving the coffin. I eat the pleasant and the fragrant and then carry within me a stinking bag of filth. If my tongue was satisfied with the utterance of your name, life would be simple. Instead, it is blabbering all the while, filling the entire world with intrigue and gossip.

At least in the sleeping state these hands should become quiet and my feet benumbed but they manipulate dreams and continue the mischief of the daytime. With what magical stuff you made this mind which has never been satisfied with all the ten thousand conclusions it has come to and it always has fresh problems to thrash and new solutions to find. If you are the one who arranges persons to dwell in bodies, Oh Lord, please tell me why you have given my body to the habitat of such an uncouth mad wretch?

Day and night come alternatively. In the same manner this grand universe which evolves from the formless to multifarious forms is said to be a show passing through the unfolding magic of time until it comes to a total dissolution. The dissolution is said to be a state when everything is covered with water; even when part of the world re-emerges from the water these oceans will girdle the earth. All the variegated manifestations on earth are said to arise out of this water in conjunction with other elements, particularly the sun that monitors the transformation of all manifested beings from above. There is circulation of blood in us. Even so is the cosmic circulation of the ocean rising into the sky as clouds, then flowing from the summits of the mountains back to the oceans, creating the scenery of season after season. Every drop of sweat that comes from our foreheads or armpits and the tears that glisten in our eyes - how many times have they gone into the ocean and come back to us? Today it is my sweat and tomorrow it is your teardrop and another day it is the melt-

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ing snow of the Himalayas. Such is the magical circulation of water. Poor-witted humans can be easily outwitted by the clever game of metamorphosis.

Of all languages the most direct, unarticulated communication is through touch. It is as if the entire world is clothed with one skin. Although the skin is the most peripheral covering of a living body, the language of touch is soul-stirring. It is hard to say how the intrigue between the faculties of smell and taste program one's mind to settle for this food or that drink. It is as if the entire world is one nose and one mouth. The morning wind quickly carries the message of the flower to the bees whose honey-comb is several miles away. The smaller the animal, the greater is its sensitivity to sniff and smell. When life was still a dream on the earth and the first being had no bones or hands or legs, the sun etched in the initial protoplasmic being a point of sensitivity out of which later not only the eyes were developed but also a whole anatomy of faculties to live the full life of an embodied person. In the operatic theater a single twang of the string of a guitar resonates in five thousand ears. It is as if the many bodies don't count - it's all one ear. From the beginning of the world, we have been listening to the choir of the heavens and we are still listening.

The day may begin with the most shocking news and may end with an unfathomable surprise. Then it is all forgotten. Everybody sleeps as if nothing occurred and again in the morning the mind is ready for new surprises and new shocks. Every time we travel a few miles from our native homes we see that the world has changed and it is ever-changing because human hands cannot remain idle. They want to pull down what was there and put together what was never before. What is most surprising is the creations that have come from the seemingly unrecognized legs. They have made countless millions of roads all around the globe. Even though footprints are not left in the sky, both the ocean and the sky have their own networks of roads because human beings are restless. We are not the only ones that travel. The little grass of our gardens is the fastest runner. When all are asleep, the grass is walking as if commissioned to cover the entire bulk of the globe, clothing the good earth in the velvety raiments of green.

The Vedāntin is not the only one who teaches unity and oneness. Everything in this world is part of the grand orchestra

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which is always teaching the unity of the one Self. If you have eyes to see and ears to hear, the entire world is a *veda*, revealing a new fact of truth and offering a fresh meaning of whatever you have yet to know. Although the Self is seemingly hidden, nothing is more public and no teacher is more vociferous than the Self which is everywhere in all forms revealing everything in all possible ways.

Mantra 12

sa yathā saindhavakhilya udake prāsta udakamevānuvilīyeta, na hāsyodgrahaṇāyeva syāt. yato yatastvādadītalavaṇameva, evam vā ara idam mahadbhūtamanantamaparām vijñānaghana eva. etebhyo bhūtebhyaḥ samutthāya tānyevānu vinaśyati, na pretya saṁjñāstītyare bravīmīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ yathā - as; *udake* - into water; *prāstaḥ* - thrown; *saindhava-khilyaḥ* - a lump of salt; *udakam* - into the water; *eva* - only; *anuvilīyeta* - dissolves; *asya* - its; *udagrahaṇāya iva* - for picking up; *na* - not; *ha* - at all; *syāt* - (one) is (able); *yataḥ yataḥ* - wherever; *tu* - but; *ādadīta* - (one) takes; *lavaṇam* - (it tastes) saline; *eva* - only; *evam vai* - even so; *are* - my dear; *anantam* - endless; *apāram* - infinite; *idam* - this; *mahat* - great; *bhūtam* - reality; *vijñānaghanaḥ* - (is) a mass of intelligence; *eva* - only; *etebhyaḥ bhūtebhyaḥ* - on account of these elements; *samutthāya* - standing out (separately); *tāni* - them; *eva* - only; *anu* - after; *vinaśyati* - is destroyed; *pretya* - after attaining (isolation); *saṁjñā* - (particular) consciousness (the separate existence of the Self); *na* - not; *asti* - there is; *iti* - this; *are* - my dear; *bravīmi* - (I) say; *iti* - so; *yājñavalkyaḥ* - Yājñavalkya; *uvāca ha* - said

"As a lump of salt thrown into water only dissolves into the water, and none can at all pick it up, but from

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whichever part one takes the water, it has only a saline taste, even so my dear, this great, endless, infinite reality is only homogeneous intelligence. On account of these elements, (the Self) stands out (separately), and as soon as these are destroyed, (its separate existence) is also destroyed. After attaining (isolation) it has no (particular) consciousness. This is what I say, my dear," so said Yājñavalkya.

When scientists postulate a big bang as the primary cause for the detailed distribution of a universe with its unknown extension of space and varying sequences of temporal events, they are at a loss to say what caused the bang, what was subjected to the bang, from where the dynamo of centrifugal and centripetal forces arose, and what intelligence decided to have structural variations that account for functional characteristics of behavior. Two elements of these postulates are important to look into. One is a primordial unity out of which distributive specificity arose. The other is the two invisible contexts of time and space that hold everything within a conceivable continuum. Time and space are relevant with regard to the cosmic universe whether it is expanding or contracting and also with regard to the manifestation of the gross which is doubtlessly arising from the subtle, probably having an unimaginable cause behind it. After a period of existence both in time and space as a mass, it disintegrates and returns to the primordial unity to which it once belonged.

Yājñavalkya's decision to break the family system and go into the very womb of his reality in search of the spirit is not an irrational or unjustifiable act coming from some idiosyncrasy in him. It has the rationale of the composition and decomposition of the total whole to which he belongs. A very relevant comment on this mantra can be found in Narayana Guru's *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* verses thirty-three to forty-one which portray the consciousness which oscillates between a physical reality belonging to the factual world and a rationally generated idea which provides a middle ground for the real and unreal to be part and parcel of the drama of life. In verse forty-one we read: "'This is a pot'; in that, what comes first, 'this', is the difficult to discern." When the scientist speaks of the big bang, he is also speaking of "this," only he is at a loss to discern it. In a general way, he says "this uni-

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verse" in which "universe" is the qualifying predicate he gives when he says "this" came from a big bang. Guru continues in verse forty-one, "For intellect and such *mahendra* magic to manifest, this itself becomes the *karu;* thus one should see." *Karu* is the die or mold which can be designed with countless millions of forms. But when molten alloy or clay or wax is frozen by the mold, certain qualities become fixed; like magic, the specific becomes more impressive than the general and the general articulates through the specific. In verse forty the Guru gives his view of how the sameness of the general becomes concretized as a specific feature of a manifested fact. He says:

> In sameness and in the other, each one's
> qualifying force always comes and becomes established;
> by the fluctuating function of these two
> which comprises all, everything
> becomes the object of awareness.

We can interpret this as an explanation of what is termed as *anya,* the other. When one individually thinks, there is the "I" and the "other." On consideration we can see that a mysterious affinity called love can easily convert "I" and "you" into "we." Further, we can say that when all the limbs are put together, that is a body. When all the structural and functional aspects of the body become pronounced, that is an individual. When individuals associate as a corporate whole that is a society. When all societies are brought under one universal group, that is a species. When all species are brought into a homogeneous whole, that is a genus. The culmination is Absolute knowledge which includes everything.

In verse thirty-eight the Guru says:

> What is known as many is the other,
> and that which shines forth as one is sameness;
> having known the state, which is going to be spoken of,
> and attained release,
> remain dissolved and blended in the state of sameness.

What is it that he wants to elucidate? He says:

> To continue, of these forces just mentioned,

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the second division, sameness, is of one quality,
while for the first, the difficult,
there is no end to its qualities;
thus these are of two kinds.

What is equivalent to the big bang? In verse thirty-three Guru talks of the primordial cause:

Knowledge, to know its own nature here,
has become earth and the other elements;
spiralling up, back and turning round,
like a glowing twig, it is ever turning.

In verse thirty-four he continues:

Mounted on the rotating wheels of a chariot
which have half-moments and such for spokes,
the world rolls on;
know this to be the beginningless divine sport
that is ever going on in knowledge.

In verse thirty-six he reminds us that "the power of knowledge is endless." As he already said, "The end of all this can be marked as sameness and the other."

In this mantra, Yājñavalkya wants Maitreyī to come to an intuitive flash of a sudden realization by which the one truth without a second stands fully revealed, shorn of all the magical specificities which veil reality with many fictitious attractions. In verse thirty-five the Guru describes that eventuality:

Like ten thousand suns coming all at once,
the modulation of discrimination arises;
the veil of transience covering knowledge is *māyā;*
tearing this away, the primal sun alone shines.

This is not just wishful thinking. It happened to Siddhartha Gautama when after five years of fruitless search and mortification of the body, he sat under a bo tree to give up his life in desperation. In a single flash he became the Awakened One, the blessed Buddha. It happened to the son of a Nazarene carpenter called Jesus. He stood in the Jordan to be baptized by a crazy

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man called John, who described himself as "the cry in the wilderness," and like lightning, the heavens broke open and the spirit of God entered Jesus and made him the Christ, the light of the world. A simple man who did not nurture his brain by going to any school, but did humble service to a pious Arabian widow, once sheltered himself in the cool shade of a cave. There he had an encounter with the one Self which is behind all selves. It commanded him to read the divine revelations. Poor Muhammad Mustafa lamented his fate and pleaded his ignorance of the written word. Once again the miracle happened; the ignorant Muhammad became the wisest of all prophets in the wink of an eye, and lo, he chanted to the world the nectar-like *suras* of the Holy Qur'an. An illiterate priest of West Bengal became infatuated with his love for a stone image of Kāli. Śri Rāmakrishna wanted the stone to become flesh. The Divine Will that once transformed the Word into flesh came to his rescue and transformed the clod of his mind into the blissful ecstasy of the highest possible realization. In a mountain cave of South India, where three oceans meet, Narayana Guru lived, befriending a cobra and a tiger as he found human nature no better than that of brutes. After years of penance in that solitary cave he suddenly awakened to the one Reality that makes everything real and precious. No one is more chosen than any other. All these masters were human beings, just like you and I. Tomorrow it can be our turn.

Mantra 13

sā hovāca maitreyī, atraiva mā bhagavānamūmuhat, na pretya saṁjñāstīti; sa hovāca na vā are'ham moham bravīmi, alam vā are idam vijñānāya.

Word Meanings

sa - that; *maitreyī* - Maitreyī; *uvāca ha* - said; *atra* - here; *eva* - just; *bhagavān* - your reverence; *mā* - me; *amūmuhat* - has confused, (saying); *pretya* - after attaining (isolation); *saṁjñā* - consciousness; *na* - not; *asti* - there is *iti; saḥ ha* - he; *uvāca* - said; *are* - my dear; *aham* - I; *moham* - anything confusing; *na* - not; *vai* - of course;

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bravīmi - am saying; *are* - my dear; *idam* - this (reality); *vai* - certainly; *vijñānāya* - to know; *alam* - (is) competent

Maitreyī said: "Just here, venerable sir, you have confused me, saying that after attaining (isolation, the Self) has no consciousness." Yājñavalkya replied: "Of course I am not saying anything confusing, my dear. This (great reality) is certainly competent to know."

In this mantra Maitreyī is stumbling on a classical doubt which has not been fully resolved either by Vedanta or by any other school of philosophy. Even in non-Hindu scriptures we also hear of the listener behind the ear, the seer behind the eye and the thinker behind the thought. As people tend to make anthropomorphic images, they not only conceive of a person as the listener-seer-thinker but because of built-in sex images may even make the listener-seer-thinker a male person. This inherent defect of the human mind makes many people incapable of transcending fixed notions that are deeply ingrained in their minds. We think not only to arrive at truth but also to convey it convincingly to others with whom we share our lives. Our thoughts are very much molded by pragmatic or utilitarian designs to cater to another person or persons. From early childhood we are impressed by the subject-object relationship and even in schools and academic circles we are taught to think of the knowledge which enters our doors of perception as proceeding from an extraneous source of physical, chemical or biologic energy reservoirs. The psychological theory of the stimulus-response mechanism has almost become an article of faith. Along with this faith hundreds and thousands of prejudices are maintained which are born of sensory illusions, flawed memory identity or adherence to conventional hearsay. The total impact of all this is what we call bondage.

Bondage mainly consists of biologic conditioning, conventional colorations and deeply ingrained conceptual flaws arising from uncritical language and articles of faith. Thus an average person stands submerged in thousands of undifferentiated prejudices. This is not only with regard to spiritual and philosophical truth but also in the field of science where a deep mathematical penetration is required. In the writings of Einstein we quite often

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come across areas where he finds it difficult to communicate to his non-physicist readers and admirers. So it is only natural that Maitreyī complains of not understanding Yājñavalkya clearly when he speaks of the dissipating and vanishing of the specific qualities which are more or less ingrained in the body-mind matrix.

Actually, this is not hard to understand. If you are wandering in a far-off land in a dream state, you forget the room where you sleep. You have no idea of the bed on which you lie or the sheets with which your body is covered. The dreamer may be sleeping next to his or her spouse on the same bed, but there is no awareness of the other person. Instead, he or she may dream of having an amorous jolly good time with another person in a congenial atmosphere or of a combat with a mortal enemy, inflicting wounds. No bit of this dream corresponds with the actual body, senses and mind with which that person has gone to sleep. Some dormant sexual desire or irrational fear causes the qualities of certain memories to manifest in that particular situation. So a pertinent question can be asked: "Who is seeing the dream? Who is listening to words in the dream? Who is interpreting it? Who identifies the people, locations and events that are happening in the dream?" There is an area which is intermediate between the wakeful, gross, physiological anatomy and deep sleep in which it is as if one has no body and no identity with name or form. When this intermediate aspect prevails, all the qualities of the familiar wakeful personality are not there. So it should not have been difficult for Maitreyī to recognize that the bio-physical, bio-chemical and psycho-biologic information bits are not the same in altering states of consciousness.

In the present case Yājñavalkya is not referring to a periphery-shift in the physiological functioning of the body but to a deeper spiritual awakening in which one goes beyond all the earlier fixations of the oral and verbal implications that accompany the neural function of a body in the alternating states of the wakeful and the dream. He already gave the example of the most pronounced characteristics of a crystal such as its shape, color and hardness all disappearing when it is dissolved in its corresponding solvent. Similarly, our individuation can totally disappear in the generic aspect of the spirit. Then all specificity such as differentia, accidents and incidents can transform into the nature of the original source from which individuation has come.

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This is experienced only in and through realization for which Maitreyī is still only an aspirant. The dialogue is between a seer and a seeker. The seeker gets a convincing answer only when he or she also ultimately becomes a seer with no differentiation whatsoever from the seen and even the act of seeing.

Mantra 14

yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram jighrati, taditara itaram paśyati, taditara itaram śṛṇoti, taditara itaramabhivadati, taditara itaram manute, taditara itaram vijānāti; yatra vā asya sarvamātmaivābhūttatkena kam jighret, tat kena kam paśyet, tat kena kam śṛṇuyāt, tat kena kamabhivadet, tatkena kam manvīta, tat kena kam vijānīyāt? yenedam sarvam vijānāti tam kena vijānīyāt? vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāditi. iti caturtham brāhmaṇam.

Word Meanings

yatra - when; *hi* - for; *dvaitam* - duality; *iva* - as it were; *bhavati* - there is; *tat* - then; *itaraḥ* - one; *itaram* - another, something else; *jighrati* - smells; *itaraḥ itaram paśyati* - sees; *śṛṇoti* - hears; *abhivadati* - speaks of; *manute* - thinks; *vijānāti* - knows; *yatra vai* - when; *sarvam* - everything; *asya* - of him (the knower); *ātmā* - the Self; *eva* - alone; *abhūt* - has become; *tat* - then; *kena* - through what; *kam* what; *jighret* - should (one) smell; *tat kena kaṁ paśyet* - should see; *śṛṇuyāt* - should hear; *abhivadet* - should speak of; *manvīta* - should think of; *vijānīyāt* - should know; *yena* - (being pervaded) by which; *idam* - this; *sarvam* - all; *vijānāti* - (one) knows; *tat* - that; *kena* - through what; *vijānīyāt* - should (one) know; *are* - my dear; *vijñātāram* - the knower; *kena* - through what; *vijānīyāt* - should (one) know; (Rest is similar.)

For when there is duality, as it were, then one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one speaks of another, one thinks of another, one knows another;

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When (however) all has become the very Self of the knower of *brahman*, then what should one smell and through what? What should one see and through what? What should one hear and through what? What should one speak of and through what? What should one think of and through what? What should one know and through what? Through what should one know that because of which all this is known? Through what, my dear, should one know the knower?

Life on earth has a dual purpose. According to the Sāṁkhyan epistemology, the knower is the *puruṣa* or spirit and the known is the procreative nature which is constituted of five gradational evolutions in the concretization from the most subtle space *(ākāśa)* to the most gross earth. The interplay between these elements is regulated by the shifting agency of manipulation that goes from *sattva* (pure, clear) to *rajas* (the colored and conditioned) to *tamas* (the inertial and opaque). All these impact the reflection of the images of both subtle and gross manifestations. Thus the implied duality between spirit and matter is epitomized in all individuated persons with varying ranges of homogeneity and heterogeneity according to the shifting stances of each modality of nature. The five senses of perception and five organs of action operate in the body as externalized inlets and outlets. The eye can see only what is presented before it. Similarly, the ear can hear only what is fed into it. Even though it is an external image that is received by the organ of perception, it is brought to the interior core of the psyche. There the spirit acts as an interpreter of the highly condensed, converged and epitomized image. Its identification and projection into a psychically devised time and space admirably coincide and concur with the source of external energy so that the person who experiences sense objects is not far from right in expecting a corresponding object which acts as a source of the feeding-in mechanism. Thus in Indian Vedanta, for all practical purposes, there is a transactional verity in the empirical data.

When a man looks at his image in a mirror he clearly sees all his features. For a while he forgets that what he sees is a reflected image. Except for a conversion of the left to right and right to left the image acts with the same validity. In our everyday life we

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have an inner ability to re-evaluate a refracted image by giving concession to the refraction index. The human eye is so made that images are received by it spherically and then magnified according to spatial proportion. Thus it is almost like having a realistic direct vision of objects outside even though the image that is received by the retina is a miniature one. But the image itself never goes to the visual area. It is conducted only as an electrical impulse. If you look at computer software you will not see any letters written there and in the hardware of the printer no characters of any language are specifically molded. But the sequential channeling of energy to the dot-matrix device in the printer can print Roman or Persian or a variety of Indian regional language alphabets to one's utter satisfaction. The ingenuity of the software of the human bio-computer has a similar device which enables one to easily choose the language one is familiar with as well as linear and pictorial symbolic devices to have an accurate imaging of the world perceived through the senses. Because of the principle of mirroring, not only in human beings, but also in other species of the animal world, there is a one-to-one correspondence in the several images generated of the same object in the minds of people as well as of other species like dogs, cats, frogs, flies etc. This facility available to living beings serves the purpose of the spirit in the individuated person *(puruṣa)* to have easy access to the functional details of procreative nature and conduct transactional relations with everything and everyone included in the life situation.

Hence in the *Sāṁkhya Pravacana Sūtra* of Kapila it is said that nature is given to *puruṣa* or the spirit for the fulfillment of its transactional motivations. What we have seen here is a study in the in-built nature of the phenomenal world which is mainly for natural proliferation and the continuation of the genus-species chain of replication. This is the world of *samsāra*. The second purpose which, according to the Vedantins, is the main one, is for the individuated consciousness to become accustomed to the transient nature of the phenomenal world where duality reigns. Ultimately the spirit will become disillusioned and turn away from the world of the shadow play and know that what is experienced here is only the transient aspects of images. In spite of the plurality of several seers with whom one shares the world which seem to be real, there is only one seer who is seeing through everybody's eyes, one listener who is listening through

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everybody's ears and one thinker who is thinking with everybody's mind. The ultimate goal is the realization of the one Self without a second. Such a polarity of dialectical poles is implied in the Absolute as a whole. So it was only natural that Maitreyī felt confused for a while.

If a Vedāntin is asked "Is the phenomenal world of images real?" His answer is "No." If he is further asked "Should we therefore dismiss the phenomenal world in its totality and the experiencing self as a void or nullity?" Again the answer is "No." Just as a person who looks into a mirror correctly understands the left side of the image for his right and vice versa, the implied conversions and distortions are to be instantly corrected to know the truth of truth *(satyasya satyam)*. Then the seer will change into honey for the seen and the seen will change into honey for the seer.

Brāhmaṇa 5

Introduction

The fifth *brāhmaṇa* is called *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* or *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*. It deals with a comprehensive discipline of total renunciation understood in its most precious sense. Knowledge and Self are the same. Absolute knowledge is the absolute knowledge of the Self. Nothing is more precious to anyone than the Self which alone is the fountain source of everybody's knowledge and energy. Where it is not present there is only the darkest non-occurrence of Self which is the same as inertia except that it is not the affirmation of anything. After whatever methods have already been imparted to Maitreyī as the pre-requisite for meditating on the Self it is now appropriate that she is introduced into the path of the Self. Naturally that is also the initiation of all those who bring themselves to the serious study of this *brāhmaṇa*. This teaching is to be directly heard from a bonafide guru who is a fully realized representative of the *śruti* or Vedānta wisdom. After carefully listening, the student should critically examine every word he or she has heard. The critical enquiry is to clear one's mind of any doubt or uncertainty that might arise.

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The very first thing to be heard is "All this is the Self." The *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* begins slightly differently, saying "*īśvara* or God is all this" *(īśāvāsyam idam sarvam)*. The logical validation is given by the argument "*īśāvāsyam* (God) dwells in or envelops everything." Actually, the theistic concept of God in the Semitic religions is far-fetched in the context of the *Upaniṣads*. Hence it is to be substituted with the sense given in the following mantras in which both the Absolute and the Self are denoted by the phrase "the self-luminous reality which is the immortal" *(tejomayo amṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ)*. This is the argument: there is nothing else which shines, which also means there is no other agent to illuminate anything. Hence it is presented as *amṛtaḥ*. But one may ask, "Is the world not changing?" Yes, it is. Before the world appears it is in the Self. When it manifests it is illuminated by the light of the Self. When it disappears it is going to remain in the Self, but the Self does not change. The Self is given here as the primal and ultimate cause. If there are any doubts left, the nineteen mantras of the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* are given to clear them all away.

From the very beginning we have noticed that a cause has in it a pragmatic and teleologic outcome of effect which, in its turn, satisfies a need in the cause. Thus the duality between cause and effect is both of a complementary nature and of the highest degree of reciprocity. This happens even in our simplest pulsations of thoughts. The nucleus of a thought arises from the awareness of an unfulfilled or causal urge expressed in the nucleic presentation of the most primary of all thoughts - "What is this?" "This" is to be known. As a consequence of that search the properties or qualities that substantiate "this" arise as an answer. It is between the question and the answer that the Self reveals a little of itself. This is a continuous process. Phenomenality is nothing other than a chain of disquiet and fulfillment. The homogeneity that exists, so to say, as the *sūtrātma* with which Maitreyī kicks off her questioning is of the nature of reciprocal support which generates a situation of bipolarity. This bipolarity is differently termed and understood. It is called truth, existence, knowledge, satisfaction, peace, mutuality and, in a comprehensive sense, love that unites. In other words, in the next nineteen mantras, we are going to gain an insight into the closely-knit tapestry which is none other than the inner content and texture of the Absolute, ever-adored by all artists, poets, musicians, con-

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templatives, mystics, scientists and lovers. This is not only a statement of fact. It also holds out an exhortation of the highest moral implication to the parts to conform to their respective roles in the game of life. Thus the supreme truth is not a dead weight. It is the most amusing, most entertaining and most meaningful theme of life - truer than truth, more blissful than bliss, and most serious in its dispensation of freedom and free will.

Earlier examples were given in the previous *brāhmaṇa* such as of the declaration of the secret which arises from the beating of the drum and the plucking of the heart-strings of the lyre which amount to the rousing of the deepest ocean of emotionality. Ultimately the clarion call to awake the absolute truth which arises from the conch shell of the Supreme should be ever-carried with us as the never-failing aid for our clarity and contemplation. The aesthetic aspect of this three-fold rousing should be meticulously related to the non-compromising logarithm in which all possible relations between quantitative enumerations can have the fixed meaning of certitude. It is in these senses that *nididhyāsana* is defined as *śravaṇa manana phalam vākyārthajñānam nididhyāsanam* - "acquiring the fruit of what is heard through a process of intense contemplation so that the purport of the instruction is fully comprehended." It should not be taken as a passive meditation *(dhyāna)*. As we pass on to the mantras, the word *madhu* is to be understood as the unitive principle, like honey which is a coming together of the essence from multitudinous sources. Also, the word *puruṣa* is inadequately translated as spirit. *Puru* means the many; *ṣa* means that which is innate. Thus *puruṣa* means that which exists in many. Now we are ready to delve into the first mantra of the fifth *brāhmaṇa*.

Mantra 1

iyam pṛthivī sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyai pṛthivyai sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasyām pṛthivyām tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam śārīra tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā: idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

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Word Meanings

iyam - this; *pṛthivī* - earth; *sarveṣām bhūtānām* - of all beings; *madhu* - (is) honey; *sarvāṇi* - all; *bhūtāni* - beings; *asyai pṛthivyai* - of this earth; *madhu* - (are) honey; *asyām pṛthivyām* - in this earth; *yaḥ ca* - which (is); *ayam* - also this; *tejomayaḥ* - shining; *amṛtamayaḥ* - immortal; *puruṣaḥ* - being, entity; *yaḥ ca ayam adhyātmam* - with reference to the body; *śārīraḥ* - associated with the body; *tejomayaḥ amṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ* - (same as above); *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - Self; *idam* - this; *amṛtam* - immortal; *idam* - this; *brahma* - (is) *brahman; idam* - this; *sarvam* - all

This earth is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this earth. This shining immortal person who is in this earth is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

Satyam jñānam anantam brahma is a definition given to the Absolute. Max Muller is of the opinion that the *anantam* spoken of here could be *ānanda*. It is not by any oversight that the *Upaniṣad* used *anantam*. A definition is like a normative notion or criteria. *Sat* is a holistic vision in which there are no parts. So it has neither any temporal nor any spatial reference to extension. It covers the totality of being. Although metaphysically *jñāna* or *cit* can be conceived of as a pure basis of knowledge through and through, in the world of manifestation, knowledge is a process. Every process has shades of clarity and sequential gradation in its projective process. Out of total absence of knowledge there can be the emergence of an awareness in which many details of explicit expression inhere. That is how *cit* is related to *cittam*. *Cit* is pure consciousness and *cittam* is registered consciousness which can be recalled. Knowledge ensues from the absence of knowledge or oblivion like the secretion of honey that comes from the hidden calyx or the dripping of honey from the honey comb.

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Awareness has the sweetness of fulfillment and satisfaction and it is symbolically comparable to honey.

The unbroken streak of honey is its characteristic that is praised. Even though life is confronted with the danger of being annihilated by a million causes and every living being experiences an innate irrational fear all the time, it is supported against it by the secreting honey of hope which sprouts in the mind from moment to moment as a fresh reason to believe. Although honey is a pleasure-giving element it need not be interpreted as *ānanda* as Max Muller said. The more predominant value in it is its unbrokenness. Every child comes from its mother's womb like a honey of rejoicement and the mother can't take her eyes off her child. There is the experience of a continuous joy. After a few years, the child becomes a mother and holds a similar child in her lap to continue the ecstasy of a mother doting on her child. Even the most transient of the joys of life such as the glow of a firefly, the spectral illumination of a rainbow, or a gloriously petalled flower which withers and drops are items of eternal value which were as much appreciated by the poets of pre-historic ages as by all of us every day. Therefore honey is to be taken here as the continuous unfoldment of truth and the enrichment of life by the mutual support given by every constituent part of the entire globe on which we live.

The earth, which is presented here as the very first measuring rod of happiness, is the grossest of all elements in which inhere its own quality of fragrance, the rich essence to bring forth vegetative life and the hidden heat that can be expressed through many forms of life ranging from the metabolic balance of the creatures living on earth to the very biochemistry of sprouting, growth and decay. Earth not only gives us the touch of life but it supports us as the very ground of the sustenance of all beings. Our atmosphere and space are also a part of our earth. It is so appropriate that earth is taken as the first source of joy.

The earth also represents nature, the counterpart of the indwelling spirit. According to the Sāṁkhyans, *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* are the binary aspects of life. We have already seen that each one complements the other. Hence it is said "this earth is honey to all beings in nature and all beings are honey to the spirit of a person that has made nature the habitat of living beings." The *puruṣa* or person is described in the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* as *tejomayaḥ amṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ*. Self-luminosity *(tejomayaḥ)* and

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immortality, *(amṛtamayaḥ)* are the characteristics of the *ātman* or the Self. Conservation and transformation are also considered to be the classical characteristics of the principle of thermodynamics. Every creature on this earth is a projection from her. It is as if the globe is the mother of all creation. In Latin earth is called *mater*, the mother of all beings. Hence it is only appropriate to think of *puruṣa* or spirit as that which illuminates all creations and that which is shining by its own light. In either case, each one is a honey to the other.

In verse eighty-one of Narayana Guru's *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* we read:

> *Prakṛti* divides: on one side is the agent of enjoyment;
> on the other, whatever shines outside
> as the here and the beyond,
> as an expansion of thisness,
> is the world of enjoyment.

In the present mantra we read *ayam eva sa yo'yamātmā*, "The Self is none other than this." Although it is seen as a captive in the body, it is the shining one and the immortal indweller. The mantra begins with *iyam pṛthivī* and closes with *idam amṛtam idam brahma idam sarvam*. There are four factors here, each identified with the other: this earth, this immortal, this Absolute and this all. In verse three of Narayana Guru's *Bhakti Darśana* he says: *"Ānanda* alone is meditated...That meditation which is blissful is *bhakti."* And in verse four he says: *ātmā* alone is *brahma*. The knower of the Self contemplates the *ātmā*, not any other. This thus meditating the Self is named as *bhakti."* Just as in the previous *brāhmaṇa*, in verse seven of *Bhakti Darśana* we read: "The wife does not merely worship the husband, nor the husband, the wife. By all, their *ānanda* alone is worshiped, which resides in the sense interests."

The same is spoken of here as the honey that is in the world that is enjoyed *(bhogya viśvam)* and the honey that is in the form of the enjoyment in the experiencer *(bhokta rūpam)*. Like Narayana Guru, Sureśvara also uses the complementary aspects of the *bhokta* and the *bhogya* in the place of what Śankara speaks of as *upakārya upakāraka*. Sureśvara, in his *Vārtika* on *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* says: "Here (in the statement, *iyam pṛthivī...)* the character of the enjoyable (and also of the effect) of *pṛthivī* etc. is ex-

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pressed with the use (of the noun) with the nominative ending and the character of the cause (or agent) and of the enjoyer of these is expressed (by the noun) with the genetive ending." 31
He gives a special note to what he mentions as the character of the enjoyable and also of the effect *"kartṛtā* implies *kāryatā* besides *bhogyatā"* and also where he speaks of the noun with the nominative ending he gives the clarification that the mutual relation implied in this verse indicates *bhoktṛ-bhogyatā* and *kartṛ-kāryatā.*

In the mantras that follow, we can see that the clarifications made by Sureśvara in his *Vārtika* and the above-mentioned verses of Narayana Guru are of immense help to us to go deep into the implications of the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa.* This *Upaniṣad* which begins with *aśvamedha* is also to be remembered for the symbolic implications of *madhu. Madhu* is legendary as the secret knowledge of *brahmavidyā* which the two Aśvins obtained from the son of Atharvan. Indra had threatened to cut off his head if he passed on the secret. To avoid this tragedy, the Aśvins, who are divine physicians, cut off the head of *Dadhyaṅ.* The legend of the *Pravargya* myth also indicates the spite between the *trivedis* and the *Atharva Veda.* This also has reference to Ajātaśatru defeating Gārgya and imparting *brahmavidyā* to him which the *brahmins* of *Ṛg, Yajus* and *Sāma Veda* did not know.

Mantra 2

imā āpaḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, āsāmapām sarvāṇi bhūtani madhu; yaścāyamāsvapsu tejomayo 'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam raitasastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ;, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

imāḥ āpaḥ - this water; *āsām apām* - of this water; *āsu apsu* - in this water; *raitasaḥ* - identified with the seed; (The word meanings of each mantra up to Mantra 14 are parallel to those of Mantra 1.)

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This water is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this water. This shining immortal person who is in this water is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

One of the earliest questions asked by the philosophers of nature was about the origin of the universe. Thales came to the conclusion that water was the original substance from which everything else came. In the genesis portrayed by the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, when hunger was confronted with the immanent possibility of death, death itself developed a mind that taxed itself to find an answer and sweat came from it. Thus, the Upaniṣadic postulation is that water was the first among the elements to appear. However, it was not water alone; it was water that was warm with the dynamic energy of search. Out of that water came froth. When it solidified, earth came from it. Everybody agrees that life came from moisture. One of the first forms of life, the protoplasm, is from water. Thus in the Upaniṣadic theory, water is bracketed with the living being's breath, its body heat, watery content and tendency to crystalize.

The all-sustaining god in India is called *Nārāyaṇa*, the dweller in the water. When water is carried in the air it becomes the shower of grace from above as rain clouds. When water carries fire it can be as gentle as mist or humidity. Or it can be the strong, muscular force of the steam with which trains or ships or other engines are driven. Water is the sap of life in every life form. Even an arid desert will look most fascinating if it gets a pool of water. Even the semblance of water such as a mirage in the wasteland of a desert can appear to be a promise.

Human beings hunger for food; even greater is their thirst for water. Before we learned to eat we learned to drink. Our first act after coming to this world was to suck our mother's breast. The breast milk of the mother is the honey of life. Water is united with all the elements; it is the honey that tempers each element to suit the convenience of all beings. It is as if there is a spirit in water. It shines with a silvery surface which reflects the

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entire world. The basic principle of mirroring the surroundings is like the water receiving the entire world as its honey. This can be seen in the dew drop that captures the brilliant image of the sun in it. It not only holds an impression of the sun but also gleams forth with brilliant colors. The invisible water in the atmosphere is an even greater blessing than the water we actually handle. It is water that gives us a gentle climate. When a breeze comes on a hot day, it is the watery element in our skin that gives us the pleasant effect of air conditioning. Think of a world without water. Then how could we taste anything sweet or sour, salty or pungent? Even for the molecular earth to be transported into the sensitive organ of smell it should have the carrier of water. The chemistry of this universe mainly works through water. It is the water in a male body that conducts his seed to the female and it is again the water in the woman through which the sperm swims into her ovum. This mantra about water as honey is thus not only metaphorically true; it is very literally true.

This water, this Self, all these bodies and this Absolute are so intimately interlaced that each one is a honey to the other. Every cup that we lift to our lips is a chanting of this prayer, "Oh water, be a nourishing honey to me and I will do everything to preserve you, in the ocean, in the lake, in the river, in the well, in the reservoir, in the subterranean water veins, in the vegetative world. When you condescend to crown our mountain peaks with your pure snow, we shall gladly, with gratitude, channel you through everyone's garden and take you to every thirsty lip, whether it is of a bird or animal, mountain range or blade of grass. Water can be called the purest of all honey because it has no color or smell, it is not tainted with any special taste. After all, it is by the rain drops that the white-hot lava was cooled into this most unique earth which alone among all the planets we know has life. And what is life but the honey of the biologic extravagance that has come to stay? Therefore, I am surely the honey of grace and in all fairness I will be honey to all."

Mantra 3

ayamagniḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyāgneḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu, yaścāyamasminnagnau tejomayo'mṛatamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam vāṅ-

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mayastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo-'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *agniḥ* - fire; *asya agneḥ* - of this fire; *asmin agnau* - in this fire; *vāṅmayaḥ* - identified with the organ of speech

This fire is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this fire. This shining immortal person who is in this fire is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

Earth, water, fire and air are part of our physical and mental being. For us, all four are indispensable. However, fire has a special place in the human imagination. The Greek people even made a story that fire was stolen by Prometheus from the gods and brought to the world with the help of Minerva. We cannot even think of a world without fire. Fire is our best friend. It is the warmth of the bodies and souls of the people we love. To hold another close to one's bosom and feel the natural fire that percolates through the outer skin and flesh of each into the other's soul is our most coveted happiness and, indeed, we would like to call it honey. In fact, in Western homes we quite often hear husband and wife, parents and children, addressing each other as "honey." Hence the metaphor which the *Upaniṣad* rishi is introducing here is not far-fetched. Maybe the Greeks were right when they said that fire was brought from the heavens. At least that is what we see when lightning fills the dark sky with the breath-taking phenomena of its fascinating brilliance. When we fly over forest areas we can see areas that have been scorched by lightning. Two elements which are prominent in fire are its self-luminosity and the heat it gives off.

Fire is considered to be the messenger of people on earth to the benevolent gods above. It is quite often accompanied by

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smoke, sparks and flames of varying colors and shades. We all share some of these qualities with fire. When we smolder with emotion, like the fire we are also fretting and fuming. When our intelligence is confused, it is as if smoke has gone into our brains and the clarity of our vision is hindered by the smoke. What we generally do to get rid of smoke from a fire is to fan the fire to make it burn bright. Similarly, when our smoky thinking is replaced with the flames of clear thinking, the fire in us develops a zest to lick at everything presented to us. If it is genuine gold, the truth of it will make us immensely happy. If what is presented is the dross of falsehood, our bright reason can burn it into ashes. It is certainly very pleasing to see a bonfire with leaping flames. The Vedic poets were imaginative people with a high sense of humor. Just as the morning sun is often described as having golden hair and beard, the fire that emerges from a burnt sacrifice is anthropomorphically looked at as a person with golden eyes and beard and long golden hair flying in the wind. The wind is the best friend of fire. When fire is playful, even in creating havoc, the wind blows into it as if feeding it with greater strength. The flame of a fire is called *jvālā* in Sanskrit. *Jvālā* literally means 'glittering'. *Jvālā* is etymologically related with glittering and gleam. When people are happy we can see a captivating twinkle in their glistening eyes. For lovers, to look into each others eyes is like sucking the honey of the soul through looking. The shimmering flame is considered to be the face of fire.

The several colors of the fire are described as the most heart-touching visions of beauty. These beautiful appearances of the fire are considered to be the *sattvika* aspect of fire: *hiraṇya* (golden), *kanaka* (pure gold), *rakta* (color of blood), *kṛṣṇa* (dark bluish), *suprabha* (extremely bright), *bahurūpa* (having multifarious forms of red). These are all considered *jihvā* (the tongues of fire). It also has seven *rajasa* flames: *padmaradha* (red ruby), *suvarnika, tṛttya, bhadra lohita, lohitakya, tadha, svetadhumin* (white smoke which goes curling), *sakatralika* (dark smoky flame), *rajasyah, katita, jiwah, kramada, kaliyanaretasah, lohita* (different gradations of blue and red). There are also *tamasa* flames: *sisvamurti* (that which assumes the dimension of the universe), *sphulingini* (that which sparks off), *dhumravarna* (of ash-colored smoke), *manojava* (that which shines far like mind reaching far off places), *lohita* (bluish-red), *kairalakya* (terrible to look at), *kāli* (the dark). If brilliance is the face of fire, firewood is de-

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scribed as the ear. The cinders of the fire are the eyes. The smoke is considered the nose of the fire. The crown of the fire is ashes.

In the *Mantra Śāstra* and *Tantra Śāstra* there are many descriptions of fire. Fire is also called *damana* because it pacifies and brings humility. When great occasions come we celebrate them with illuminations of various colored flames *(citrabhānu)*. When we become resplendent with wealth we are also like fire and can be named *vibhavasahu*. Fire is the greatest purifier. A surgeon cleans his surgical instruments by exposing them to fire or steam. Hence fire is called *sudhi*. Although fire and water are like brothers, the excess of one can be quelled by the other. If something is wet we can dry it with fire. Hence it is called *apittam*. Fire wards off enemies. Hence it is *auva*. One of the greatest miracles of the world is the fire that issues out of the oceanic depth. Hence it is called *badavagni* or *badavanala*. There are ceremonial offerings of fire such as the burning of camphor at an altar. In that case fire is called *arci* and the offering is *arcana*. When there is a brush fire we cannot predict which course the fire is going to take. Hence it is called *hetiḥ*. The flames of fire sometimes look like the hair on the head, hence it is called *śikhā*. Sparks are like lyrical metaphors; dark and inert carbon particles can shine with a little fire embedded in them. In fact the soul in us is the fire that animates our inertial bodies.

The fire is a good example to know that happiness is found in moderation. A moderate fire is *santāpa* which means that which slowly increases the heat. When it is cold it is biting; when it is hot it is scalding. When a homeostasis is established between the two it is the most pleasant. Nothing transforms and converts like fire. Things with varying forms, colors and shapes can all be reduced to the unity of ashes. Hence fire is called *pasitam*. There is a point of transformation of ashes beyond which it cannot be reduced. That is *raksa*. In countries where the dead are burned, fire is the leader that takes the dead person's soul to the beyond. In that case fire is called *tirupati*. Fire is also the great cleanser. It has no compunction in eating the dead. The south-western corner is *konum*. Usually the dead are cremated in that corner of the dead person's estate. Hence it is called *kaunapa*. Human beings greatest relish came when they found out that food can be cooked with fire. The barbecue fire is called *kraviata*. There is no end to such descriptions of fire in Indian source books.

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In the Indian spiritual context fire is the central piece around which the worshippers gather. Whatever is offered into the fire is given to it as if the fire is the receiver of humanity's gifts to God. Narayana Guru simplifies the reference to fire in the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* with a special mantra in which fire is seen as the homogeneous principle between the Absolute and the relative. The first line of the mantra is *AUM agne tava yat tejas tad brahmam* - "O fire, this brilliance of yours belongs to the Absolute." He continues, *atastvam pratyakṣam brahmāsi* - "When you shine forth and are perceptual we see you as the omnipresent." *Tvadīyā indriyāṇi mano buddhiriti sapta jihvāḥ* - "Secondly, there is a fire in us which also has seven tongues like the element fire. Our seven tongues are the five senses, mind and intellect." Guru does not differentiate between *sattvika, rajasika* and *tamasika* flames. He enumerates only: *kāli, karāli, manojavā, viśvaruci, sphuliṅgini, dhūmravarṇa* and *nīlalohita.*

Apart from these religious considerations of fire, there are many scientific estimations of it as contributing a honey-like beneficence to the maintenance of the world's healthy atmosphere and climatic conditions. James Lovelock, in *The Ages of Gaia* says:

> Oxygen has been constant at twenty-one percent by volume in the Phanerozoic. The evidence of this constant high concentration is the presence in the sediments of layers containing charcoal. These can be found as far back as two hundred million years. The presence of charcoal implies fires, probably forest fires. This sets sharp limits on the atmospheric oxygen abundance. . . Fires cannot be started, even in dry twigs, when oxygen is below 15 percent; above 25 percent oxygen, fires are so fierce that even the damp wood of a rainforest would burn in an awesome conflagration. [32]

The ecosystem of the world has many systems which regulate the heat in the atmosphere. This is described in detail later in the same book.

Previously in the *Upaniṣad* we have seen that earth, water and fire are described as aspects of the mortal. However, as fire is always associated with air, the element of the immortal in it is also a value to be adored. Fire comes from all directions and in

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so many forms to us to gladden our souls, from our peaceful days in our mother's womb until we are received into the peaceful conclusion of a tumultuous life, by our concluding flare-up attended on by our life-long friend, the fire.

Mantra 4

ayam vāyuḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asya vāyoḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasminvāyau tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam prāṇa tejomayo'mṛatamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *vāyuḥ* - air; *asya vāyoḥ* - of this air; *asmin vāyau* - in this air; *prāṇaḥ* - the vital force

This air is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this air. This shining immortal person who is in this air is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as the vital force in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

The first pulsation of a cell has in it a mechanism of contraction and expansion. It is as if there is a game going on between vacuum and nature's abhorrence of vacuum. All through the growth of the fetus this mechanism is used to supply the growing cells to continue their function with the filling and emptying of the cup of the living organism. The basic filling and emptying is of the life energy associated with air which in its organic function is called the vital breath. The breath has an upward movement and a downward movement. The upward moving breath is called *prāṇa* and the downward moving breath is called *apāna*. It is as if the parameter of the vital breath has the plus and minus of a

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magnetic force operating, one pulling the breath downward and the other pulling it upward.

The human organism is not just a hollow pipe through which air moves up and down. It is constituted of millions of cells. These cells are of various kinds such as of the bones, the muscles, the sinews, the glands. Just as the body has an outer environment it also has an interior environment where liquids, gases and thermal agents of varying pressures are to be held without the contents of one bursting into the other. The most ingenious bio-engineering keeps the various liquids from getting mixed up. There are innumerable rare chemicals and elements separated only by very thin walls. In spite of such liquid and air-tightness being maintained, the life breath has to go to every living cell of the body and carry the nutrients and blood to even the most subtle capillaries. We do not know exactly how *prāṇa* maintains both the requirements of the two main networks of the body, one supplying nourishment and the other electrical energy. For the whole body, as well as all its specific regions, *prāṇa* supplies the supervisory management for its sustenance, repair and maintenance. Therefore the element air is considered to be the greatest miracle that is sustaining the world, both in its microcosmic aspects as well as macrocosmic. Just as we are all born of *prāṇa*, the heavenly bodies such as the sun and all other stars also began with a wisp of wind. The air in our bodies which in Sanskrit is called *vāyu* and *vāta* also functions as one of the major humors which watches over all our life activities in its equipoise with the thermal liquid (bile or *pitta)* and mucous *(kapha)*.

The external atmosphere is always changing its mode of display and keeping this world enormously interesting to us. The sky clears to a bright blue color and then, like magic, fills with clouds of all intensities and colors. Then the clouds cool and shower rain. The climatic conditions of the biosphere alternate between hot and cold. Sometimes the wind is so lyrical that it interlocks itself with the swaying branches of trees as if it has entered into a dance program. It is so gentle as to go close to a flower bud and kiss it, tickling the petals to unfurl. When the same breeze passes over the broad bosom of the ocean it suddenly becomes amorous. It raises leaping waves and hides under them to make a million tunnels in which surfers can have their most energetic sport. Nothing is more restless than the wind. It can be demonic, giant-like. This invisible elf or fairy among the

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elements has varying degrees of friendship with the thundering clouds, the morning clouds of vermillion hue and the golden-capped ripples of the watery expanse. Sometimes the mighty wind is like a small baby blowing at a dandelion. Where it combines its games of aesthetics with utility, it is like a bubble game to an on-looker. At the same time, the wind is duty-bound to the distribution of seeds far and wide.

The Indian rishis have given their great admiration to the wind or the element air and named its different aspects according to their function. The god of wind is also the god of the oceans, *Varuṇa*. *Varam* in Sanskrit means a boon. The bestower of the boon is *Varuṇa*. People pray to him for the boon of a long life. If *Varuṇa* withdraws from a person he dies instantaneously. He enters every organism as soon as it is blessed with life. The blessing is none other than breathing. The period between the first breath and the last breath is called *āyus* - a life time. When we breath the air it is called *soṣmana*. The gentlest touch of the air we breathe is the faintest of all tactual experience. It is called *sparśana*. When the air changes into wind, we accredit it with the function of blowing. In that state the air is *vāyu* - the wind that blows.

The life-giving breath is like a mother. It not only gives us life but every organism is programed to carry out a special function. The functioning breath is called *mātariśvan*. We first make friends with *mātariśvan* when we are in the mother's womb. Like the potter whose gentle touch to the clay on the wheel gives it its amazing shape, it is the *mātariśvan* that licks every part of our body into its shape - the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the heart, the liver, even the hands and legs. This wind of maternal love not only helps each fetus to grow into a baby. It also has another function which is yet to be recognized. When the sperm and ovum are united in the mother's womb it is the *mātariśvan* which aids the presiding deity of life *(prajāpati)* to choose and unite chromosomes with their respective mates.

Wind is always on the move. Hence it is called *sadāgati* (*gat* is wind; *sadā* is always being moved). As wind mainly creates the atmosphere by carrying in it invisible molecules of water, it is also called *prasādasvaḥ*. Like water, wind is also a great transporter. It receives particles of smell from the molecular earth and goes everywhere like a duty-bound agent to tell the world where the trees are in bloom and what flowers waft which kind of fra-

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grance. In that respect the air is called *gandhavāhana*, the distributor of fragrance. A very selective aspect of it is for us to breathe in as *prāṇa* and that is called *anaprāṇane*. As the wind moves fast, it is *asugah*. Sometimes the wind is playful. It is like a little child, irresponsible, going hither and thither. This is especially so when there are plenty of flowers in the gardens in the vernal season. Then it is called *samira*. It is not always playful. If one is ready to depart, it will sit near by to suck the air from the dying person so that the *udana* or supervising breath can be released. Then it is *marutah*.

It is not only in the specific role of maintaining life in individuals that the air functions. It is in charge of all bodies including the heavenly bodies. Hence it is called *jagatprāṇa*. The atmosphere is called *napasvan*. Wind is called *vāta* not only when it blows in the atmosphere but also when it ventilates the cell. If there is a blockage somewhere, that part of the body develops inflammation and lets the owner of the body know the blockage is there by causing pain. The *vāta* also polices the body; if any foreign matter gets into the body and causes a blockage, the wind will gather behind it and give such a loud blast that one coughs or sneezes. This is often necessary when the columns of the intestines are blocked. This cleansing role of the air is also called *pavanaḥ* or *pavamānaḥ*. *Prāṇa* has a power to regulate itself when breath does not happen with natural ease. In that respect it is called *prapañcana*. When it is necessary to shake the body to maintain its heat or help a person to withstand a frightening or embarrassing situation, air causes tremor, shivering and trembling in the body. In that respect it is *prakampana*. *Prāṇa* is said to have its center in the heart. *Apāna* is stationed in the anus. *Samāna* is in the genital. *Udāna* is in the throat. *Vyāna* is all over the body. It is the one omnipresent *prāṇa*. It is the duty of the *prāṇa* to take the food from the mouth to the stomach. Pushing the waste from the stomach through the excretory organs is the duty of *apāna*. *Samāna* is active in the stomach to oxidize food and is in the larynx to distribute energy to the words that are formulated for articulation. The winking of the eyes and the control of waking and sleeping comes from the combined effort of *udāna* and *vyāna*. We have seen that the *udgāna* was exercised mainly with the aid of the *vyāna* stationed in the mouth. Hence we called it *ayāsya* and *aṅgirasa*. Minor winds are *naga*, *kurma*, *kṛkara*, *devadatta* and *dhanaṁjaya*. *Naga* helps you to

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release a word from the larynx; *kurma* keeps the eyes open when one wants to stare. Sneezing is controlled by *kṛkara; devadatta* brings yawning; *dhanaṁjaya* is everywhere. Even when the *prāṇa* leaves the body after death *dhanaṁjaya* is there to help the body to disintegrate and it leaves a dead person only after the completion of the cremation or the total merger of the dead body with the dirt in the grave. The Sanskrit language also coined many words to report the general function of wind such as *satatam* which means all-ways, *aśrāntam* which means untiringly, *aviratam* which means unbroken and *nityam* which means ever.

We can think of our body as a wayside nest in which the life-giving *prāṇa* comes and rests, like a bird bringing the joy of the outside world to its small little home. We can also see *prāṇa* taking all the dreams and desires of the indweller of the body out into the open. Is *prāṇa* outside us or inside us? It is hard to say, but it is our comrade in arms all the time. To whom else can we pray but to *prāṇa* - to keep this game going or to carry us away when it thinks the game is over.

Mantra 5

ayamādityaḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyādityasya sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasminnādityе tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam cākṣuṣastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *ādityaḥ* - sun; *asya ādityasya* - of this sun; *asmin ādityе* - in this sun; *cakṣuṣaḥ* - identified with the eye

This sun is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this sun. This shining immortal person who is in this sun is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This Self is none other

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than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

It was Plato who said that what the eye is to the body the sun is to the world. Although the sun is the brightest object we know, its light only illuminates and does not see what it illuminates. This will turn out to be an overstatement when we clearly understand the function of sun in the cosmos. Every living being endowed with visual perception is a counterpart of the energizing sun which presides over the solar system as well as the geo-biological world of physical and chemical reality. When the sun appears on the horizon our sleep consciousness also comes to appreciate its own horizon of awareness. There is a clear alternating state of consciousness in all heliotropic beings. We are heliotropic animals and as such we begin our day's programs when the sun rises in the East. Of course it is a convenient way of putting it to say the sun rises although it is the earth that revolves and rotates and introduces us to a twelve hour exposure to the sun's light day after day. *Āditi* is the unbroken. The continuity of the radiation of the sun is without any break. Hence sun is called *Āditya*.

There is a double function in the illumination of things. One is to impress the picturesque form of a thing which gives us the experience of visual perception. Even when the perception is shifted to another object and what has been perceived is tucked away in the unconscious or in the dark, what has been seen has not gone anywhere. It remains with us as a life-time memory which can be recalled at any time. The first is perception - the ontologic image of the here and now. The second is memory - the abstract of the perception out of which the original impression can be re-created whenever necessary. Memory mimics what has once been experienced. It is with this device that the transient or fleeting of the empirical world is embossed as a potential dream that can be actualized again and again. The sun directly acts upon our senses to present objects with its secret mechanism of imposing the gestalt or picturesque item of vision into the darkest shadow with a mysterious shading of light. It is not just with light that something is illuminated but by contrasting the visible with the invisible. The eye is so made that it is as sensitive to light as to making configurations of the bright with the dark and

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interpreting the whole image as a single unit. The physical engineering of light and shadow is the very object matter that also instantaneously becomes a subject matter. There can be a break in the seeing of objects but there is no break in the preservation of impressions within the faculty of vision. *Āditya* is thus one of the most intriguing names in the Sanskrit language for that which presides over the destiny of all those who perceive.

The sun not only reveals pictures to us. It has a direct hand in the sustenance of every living cell of our bodies. In the greenery which see see all around us, whether as the lawn under our feet or lush vegetation of herbs, shrubs and trees, the daily foods of living beings are processed and deposited in the green bank of the leaves on which all living beings thrive. Even though chlorophyll is not directly prepared in us, we have to eat the green leaves prepared by nature, either directly or indirectly. We may not directly eat as much grass or herbs as goats, sheep, cows or buffalo, but we eat the milk products and meat of these animals which are processed out of the greens of the world. The sun not only has a direct impact on our sensory system. It also monitors our inner psychic organs such as the mind *(manas)*, the recalling faculty of our memory *(cittam)*, and the reasoning and judging of our intellect *(buddhi)*. As each person is given an individuated face value by which he or she is distinguished from another, the ego is perpetuated by sunlight. We owe the color of our bodies to the sun. Pigmentation of all sorts, not only in the human but also in the colorful leaves and flowers in the vegetative world and the variety of insect shells, bird feathers and fish fins show the ingenuity of the sun's light that can paint a world of such immaculate beauty around us.

Sunlight is not just a casual visitor to us. Both physically and mentally we live in it and float in it. Because sunlight is omnipresent, so far as we are concerned, it is also omnipotent and omniscient. Actually no *deva* (shining one) has greater proximity and interaction with us than the sun. We think with the sun's light and we dream with the sun's shadow. Moving from the first to the second is from the gross to the subtle. The four alternating states of consciousness - wakeful, dream, deep sleep and transcendence of all this - are to be directly attributed to the sun.

We have already seen how the Sanskrit language has meaningfully and joyously festooned every attribute of the elements earth, water, fire and air. The same worshipful service has been

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done to the sun as well by giving an appropriate name to each of its aspects. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, a legendary incident is told of a moment of distress for Rāma when he was overpowered by the magical weapons of Rāvaṇa. Magic belongs to the world of *tamas*, where there is not enough light to discern between truth and untruth. It is said that the great mythical figure called Agastya appeared before Rāma and asked him to meditate on the heart of the sun *(ādityahṛdaya)* to recapture his certitude. The *ādityahṛdaya* mantra given in the *Rāmāyaṇa* has a great resemblance to the spiritual discipline of pondering over the names of the Absolute. Elsewhere in the *Upaniṣad* we read "You become what you meditate on." Every prayer we make is a device by which the contemplating or pondering mind is led to the glowing spirit aspect of that which is pondered upon. When we compare the *ādityahṛdaya* mantra with the synonyms given in the *Amarakośa* we see that they match.

Traditionally Indians speak of twelve *Ādityas*, each one considered to be an aspect of *Viṣṇu*, the all-sustaining principle. Light is a sustaining principle in many ways. Hence it is only normal to think of *Āditya* as *Viṣṇu*. *Āditya* is given in the *Amarakośa* as twelve psychic archetypes: *Indra* (monitor of the senses), *Dhātā* (the retainer of the foundation), *Parjanya* (the releaser of energy), *Tvaṣṭā* (the designer of shapes), *Pūṣā* (the nourisher), *Aryama* (the chief of the *Manes* whose path is the Milky Way), *Bhaga* (the source of erotic energy), *Vivasvān*, *Viṣṇu* (he who dwells in all), *Aṁśumān* (one who spreads out his light both in the real and in the unreal), *Varuṇa* (bestower of blessings), and *Mitra* (intimate friend in the heart). The *Vasus* are also considered to be aspects of *Āditya*. They are the *gaṇadevatās*, born of *Vasu*, daughter of *Dakṣa*. They are: *Dhara*, *Dhruva*, *Soma*, *Ahas*, *Anila*, *Anala*, *Pratyūṣa*, *Prabhāsa*. In different legends they are named differently.

The ascetic discipline by which one succeeds in the world *(lokajit)* is a solar virtue. One who is victorious over *saṁsāra* is called *jina*. Ten kinds of strengths are said to come from solar grace. In one sense *Āditya* is also *Vināyaka* because clarity of vision enables one to avoid many errors. Also the sun is called *Śrighanasasta* (one who teaches science, *Śāstra*). Being helpful for contemplation, it is also called *muni*. As a reservoir of energy which gives us the incentive to act, the sun is also *Sūraḥ*. It is *Sūrya*, one who traverses in the infinitude of space. *Aryamā* is

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also a synonym for wandering. Sun is called *Divākara* because it brings the day to us and *Bhāskara* because of its effulgence. As it dispells darkness it is called *Ahaskara*. It is called *Prabhākara* because it gives the glorious effulgence of light, *Vibhākara* because of specific illuminations and *Vivasvan* because when the sun shines we do not see the moon and stars. It is capable of great inclusiveness. As heat brings water, it is also called *Arka*. As it is capable of rejuvenating dying beings, it is called *Mārtaṇḍa*. It is *Pūṣā*, the nourisher. It is called *Dyumaṇi* because it shines in the sky like a jewel, *Dharam* because it resurrects the wise, *Mitra* because it is also one's intimate friend living in the heart. As it has many colors, it is called *Citrabhānu;* as it gives heat, *Tapa;* being worthy of worship, *Ravi;* witness of all our actions, *Karmasākṣi;* as if the one eye of all, *Jagaccakṣus;* as it festoons everything with the garlands of light, *Aṁśumāli;* being friend of the world, *Lokabāndhava;* like a treasure chest, *Dhāmanidhi;* as it can also strike with mortal rays, *Chandamsu*. The mighty sun is considered to be a fiance of the lotus flower, *Padmanipati*. *Sūrya* has many names but he is mainly called *Mārtaṇḍa* and *Vivasvān*.

In the *Cākṣuṣa Manvantara* the twelve *Ādityas* were known as the *Tuṣitas*. The twelve *Tuṣitas* were reborn in *Aditi* as *Ādityas*. When *Aditi* was carrying the fetus who was to be born as *Sūrya*, *Candra* visited her. *Aditi* was not strong enough to attend on him. Misunderstanding her attitude, *Candra* cursed her and killed *(mṛta)* the fetus *(aṇḍa)*. That made her very sorrowful. Hearing the cause of her sorrow, *Kaśyapa* revived the fetus. That is how *Sūrya* got the name *Mārtaṇḍa*. When the child was born he was called *Vivasvan*. He married the daughter of *Viśvakarmā* whose name was *Saṁjñā*. These names reveal many secrets of symbolism. *Viśvakarmā* means the creator of the entire universe. *Saṁjñā* means a mark or sign by which a certain object is identified. The universe is made up of individual things which are all identified with separate names; hence the name *Saṁjñā* is very meaningful. A boy and a girl were born to *Saṁjñā - Yama* and *Yamī*. Names are all classified according to gender. So it is appropriate that what was born to *Saṁjñā* was both male and female. As *Sūrya* was extremely hot, *Saṁjñā* did not want to stay with him. So she substituted herself with a dark maid called *Chāyā*. *Chāyā* is shadow. For the 180 names of *Vivasvan* see Chapter 315 of the *Vana Parva* of *Mahābhārata*.

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There is no end to the qualities of the sun described in Indian literature. We are implicit in the sun and therefore we cannot adequately objectify this light of all lights. If one thinks one's life is of a wretched person lost in the dungeon of darkness, one should certainly pray to be let into the abundant flow of the great energy of life symbolized by the sun. Such a prayer is beautifully given in verse three of Śankara's *Saundarya Laharī:*

To the uninstructed, You are the city of light,
banishing inner darkness, placed in mid-ocean,
To inert ones, the mind-expanding honey
that oozes from celestial blossoms,
While for indigent spirits, You become
a cluster of philosopher's stones,
And for those submerged in the birth-cycle ocean,
the very tusk of *Viṣṇu's* boar. 33

All that we can say is: "Oh, The most adorable sun, in your grace and graciousness you are overwhelming."

Mantra 6

imā diśaḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, āsām diśām sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamāsu dikṣu tejomayo' mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyam adhyātmam śrautraḥ prāti śrutkastejomayo' mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo' yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

imāḥ - these; *diśaḥ* - directions; *āsām diśām* - of these directions; *āsu dikṣu* - in these directions; *srautraḥ* - identified with the ear; *prātiśrutkaḥ* - identified with each occasion of hearing

These directions are honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to these directions. This shining immortal person who is in these directions is honey to all beings

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and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

To us this phenomenal world is made up of name, form and activity *(nāma, rūpa,* and *karma). Nāma* is what is spoken and communicated by one to another. That gives the conceptual mark of whatever is mentioned to be taken notice of. What is spoken is heard by the ear. Therefore our ears are considered to be in intimate relationship with what is spoken. The ears are placed on the sides of the head so they are almost at an equal distance from what is in front and what is behind; they can also directly listen to whatever is on the right and on the left. Sound is considered to be the property of space or *ākāśa*. Space is generally divided into the East, the West, the South and the North. If we draw a square and put "X" at the center we can mark East and West, South and North, and the diagonals of South-East, South-West, North-East and North-West. In ancient days, when people wanted to make a house, they started with drawing a circle. At its central locus, they planted a post. Then they watched how the shadow fell when the sun rose and set. Where the shadow of the pole fell on the circumference of the circle at sunrise, they marked West and where the shadow fell at sunset they marked East. Then they drew another line intersecting the East-West axis. On their right side they marked South and on their left North. This gave them the orientation to build their houses facing the rising sun. When you have a fixed orientation in your mind of the four directions, you can carry that inner map with you wherever you go.

The very first thing needed to bring order into a person's life is to gain orientation. If a person does not know where East is, he will not know the other directions either. Such a person is called disoriented. Disoriented people are confused. We have seen that the sun is everything to us. Although sun is an object outside us, orientation is a subjective notion within. Sun brings the certitude of visible forms. Orientation brings us the conceptual certitude of all the images that we arrange in our minds to have a subjective replica of the world in which we live. The direc-

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tions are seemingly outside but their operational field is within our consciousness. For the purpose of arranging the sequences of events in our lives, we observe the relationship of earth with the sun and mark the day and night into twelve hours each. Then the physical directions are accepted into the temporal directions also. Here we have an altogether invisible factor of life which is necessary to arrange the objective physical factors of the world and the subjective notions of relationships. Even when we sit with our eyes closed, all by ourselves, we are not shorn of the directions of the world. We know where London is and where Tokyo is. We know the North Pole and the South Pole. We know in which direction our thoughts should go to be in the Atlantic or to reach the Pacific. This is one of the greatest wonders of life. It is as if we are like pawns on a chess board - we can move forward or backward or sideways and, in reality, all these are thought symbols in the subjective world of our minds.

We not only have concepts but also prejudices based on these directions. People easily make distinctions between Northerners, Southerners, Orientals and Occidentals. If West is where the sun sets and East is where it rises, then there is no point on the globe which not East and West. Yet we have objectified our world by using maps and the globe. By placing imaginary lines we have designated the Eastern hemisphere and Western hemisphere, the Northern half and the Southern half. We have made a geographic mesh with longitudes and latitudes. All these are required for our perspective and orientation. If we make mistakes we will be marked by our fellow beings as a person with no proper perspective or as a disoriented person.

We have said this world is made of name and form. Each one of us has a name and an identifiable form. Every such individual with name and form is expected to transact appropriate business with others because this world is essentially a world of values and relationships. Values are to be arranged in a graded manner. Artists and commercial people have made a standardized color solid and numbered every shade of color according to pigment and saturation. So it is not necessary to show a color sample when you go to a shop. If you mention the number of the color, the shopkeeper can give you the exact color that conforms to that number. That is the advantage of orientation and correct perspective. This is true of every field of values. Even in the modern world, when one person sees another, he or she will be

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curious to find out to what astrological sign the other belongs. A person with the sign of Sagittarius may not like to be friendly with someone of the sign of Pisces or Taurus. In the world of food, there are likes and dislikes. The Jews have their *kosher*, Moslems reject everything *haram*. What is right with one person is wrong with another. Therefore, the customs of the world prescribe certain etiquettes to be maintained. A man hugging and kissing a man in India is considered to be an excellent fraternal greeting; in Australia it is described as homosexuality. People everywhere in the entire world of transaction classify and categorize. The principle behind these classifications and categorizations is the principle of direction.

In transaction there is movement. It begins and it ends. An arrow can be drawn from the beginning to the end point. That is the direction. At crossroads everywhere in the world there are traffic lights. When one light turns green the other turns red. At some of the great junctions of the world you may encounter many traffic lights facing in all directions. In order to prevent confusion, sign boards will be placed there to say "Obey only your command." But some motorist who does not know what his command is may crash head-on into a car coming the opposite way. It is essential to know direction. In busy places such as major airports, different channels are distinguished with different colors. If you don't keep to the right color you will end up in the wrong place. The more we look into direction the more we find that every minute is monitored by a specific direction. At the parade ground the officer shouts "Attention." That's a direction. Until the soldiers hear "Stand at ease," they have to maintain their tension. The direction of children is to grow toward death and of the old is to vacate.

Directions have many more implications for our lives. They are the property of space *(ākāśa)*, the all-embracing world to which we belong. The Absolute is replete with the relative; space belongs to the Absolute and directions belong to the relative. When the direction is right, it is honey to us. When we maintain the right direction we are honey to others. When we do not maintain the proper direction, we become a gall, bitter and poisonous, and will be stealthily removed. Thus it is essential that we be honey to direction and the direction of others honey to us. Relationship is dialectical. You relate to your self. You relate to another. You relate to all that is known. You relate to the trans-

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cendental or unknown. When these four relationships are in perfect harmony, you are the harmonious darling of the world and everybody will think of you only with sweetness in their consideration and loving care. Such is the magic world of direction.

Mantra 7

ayam candraḥ sarveṣām bhutanām madhu, asya candrasya sarvāṇi bhutani madhu; yaścāyamasmiṅścandre tejomayo'mṛatamyaḥ puruṣaḥ yaścāyamadhyātmam mānasastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *candraḥ* - moon; *asya candrasya* - of this moon; *asmin candre* - in this moon; *mānasaḥ* - identified with the mind

This moon is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey this moon. This shining immortal person who is in this moon is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

The world has two calenders, the solar calendar and the lunar calendar. Traditionally India has used the lunar calendar which is based on the changing appearance of the moon as it transforms from the full moon to the new moon. Each day after the full moon the size of the moon decreases because it comes under the shadow of the earth. On the fifteenth day the moon is totally obliviated. It is called *amāvāsī*. On the sixteenth night the moon is one day old but that day also it cannot be seen. Hence it is called *ṣodaśakala*. The time between the full moon and new moon is divided in half and each half is a week. Indian astrology

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is also based on the lunar calendar. Indians rely more on a poetic appreciation of the moon than on scientific scrutiny of it. According to the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* the moon rules the heart. Hence it is associated with love. In Sanskrit the moon is called *candra*. *Candra* is also called *candramā* and is poetically compared to camphor. Even as we watch, camphor evaporates and vanishes without our knowledge. Like that, the moon wanes and disappears in fifteen days. Until its disappearance it shares its sheen with all beings. Unlike the scorching light of the sun, moonlight is like the showering of milk-white mist. Hence, all those with poetic minds are always in love with the moon.

Another meaning of *candra* is that which brings rejoicing. When the moon shines, water vapor in the air condenses and becomes mist. In the night when the petals of flowers unfurl the moon lovingly kisses every petal and leaves its impression on the flower like a pearly dew drop. Hence the moon is called *indu*. If the lotus opens for the sun, the lily's fiance is the moon. Hence it is called *kumuda bāndhava*. The gods above and the *cakora* bird on earth quench their love-thirst by sipping moon-sheen. As the moon rules the heart, it is the favorite of the poets. Lovers, poets and lunatics adore the moon as their own self. The moon is considered to be the lord of the stars, not the astronomer's stars but the twenty-seven constellations of Indian astrology. From Aśvatnī to Revatī there are twenty-seven stars said to be the daughters of Dakṣa (*dakṣa* means always in time and always attentive). The star always seen near to the moon is called Rohiṇi. As the moon has a special affinity for Rohiṇi he is like a lover pining away for his dear one; the legend goes that the moon becomes consumptive because of his love affair. As he is the son of the creator, Brahma, Candra is allowed to regain his strength after fifteen days. These symbolic stories give helpful indications about the psychic life of human beings.

There is not a poet in the world who has not written at least one line of appreciation of the moon. There is no need for anyone to appeal to the moon to love us or for us to love the silvery moon because we are enthralled by its silent brilliance. In the final verse of his adoration of Śiva, Narayana Guru sings in exultation:

To pacify the whole world with its cool sheen,
the full moon to rise in brilliance and
with its resplendence to make the heavenly lake

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where lilies bloom to be radiant is what I desire to see.

This is the only desire of a great poet. Saigyō, the philosopher-mystic-poet of Japan, has written a whole book in honor of the moon. These are some of his most loved dedications to the moon:

Clouds dispersed
And still it looks vague,
Dreamy up there;
Tonight's moon hanging
In the haze of spring.

In spring I spend day
With flowers, wanting no night;
It's turned around
In fall when I watch the moon
All night, resenting the day.

A world without
The scattering of blossoms,
Without the clouding
Over of the moon would deprive
Me of my melancholy.

Let it be this way:
Under the cherry blossoms,
A spring death,
At that second month's midpoint
When the moon is full.

So taken with
The faultless face and radiance
Of an alluring moon,
My mind goes farther....farther....
To reach remote regions of the sky.

Tree-filtered
Patch of moonlight fades with dawn;
Staring at it gives
Loneliness... deepened by winds
Soughing through pines on the peaks.

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This leaky, tumble-down
Grass hut left opening for the moon,
And I gazed at it
All the while it was mirrored
In a tear-drop fallen on my sleeve.

Limitations gone:
Since my mind fixed on the moon,
Clarity and serenity
are some thing for which
There's no end in sight.

Not a hint of shadow
On the moon's face.... but now
A silhouette passes -
Not the cloud I take it for,
But a flock of flying geese.

Next to my own
If would be good to have
Another's shadow
Cast here in the pool of moonlight
Leaked into my hut of bamboo grass.

As always, the moon
Night after night after night
Will stay on here
At this grass hut I put together -
And now myself must leave.

Pounding waves and breakers...
Of my heart, so I spend the night
In bed with the moon's
Light that slips in through
The gaps in my reed hut's roof.

We would together
Make the journey, I on land
And it in the sky,
If the moon comes out to stay:
Empathy both ways.

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Back in the capital
We gazed at the moon, calling
Our feelings "deep" -
Mere shallow diversions
That here don't count at all.

In the portrait
Emerging on the moon I spied
Your face... so clearly,
The cause of tears which then
Quickly cast the moon in clouds again.

No pock nor shadow
On the moon's face, so just then
I recalled yours - clear
Til tears from my own mind
Defaced the moon once more.

The moon, like you,
Is far away from me, but it's
Our sole memento:
If you look and recall our past
Through it, we now can be one mind.

That moon up there:
How many more autumns will
I be here to see it?
Something long ago fixed for
This life by an earlier one.

Side by side, year
After year, you and I
Gazed and gazed
At the autumn moon, which now,
Seen alone, is the sum of sadness.

To that person
Wanting recall of events past
In this world below:
"Why not ask the moon above?"
May be the most fit response.

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The moon, as dawn breaks,
Glides freely through thick clouds,
Layer on layer:
Then strata of the past as well,
One by one open before my mind.

In early winter's rain
I'm pleased when up at the peak
Clouds spread open
To show me the moon I longed to see:
A storm that knows compassion. 34

Matsu Basho, the greatest among the haiku poets of Japan made many beautiful references to the moon. In the summer of 1691 he wrote:

The cuckoo through the dense bamboo grove,
Moonlight seeping.

He compared the round end of a cut tree to the full moon:

I fell a tree
And gaze at the cut end - the moon of tonight.

He was even capable of connecting with a worm taking advantage of moonlight:

At night, quietly,
A worm in the moonlight
Digs into a chestnut.

Seeing a thin moon-beam Basho related it to the singing of a insect. He wrote:

Above a wintery garden
The moon thins to a thread:
Insect's singing. 35

Henry Thoreau, who probably loved nature like the rishis of old, wrote of the moon:

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The full-orbed moon with unchanged ray
Mounts up the eastern sky,
Not doomed to these short nights for aye,
But shining steadily.

She does not wane, but my fortune,
Which her rays do not bless,
My wayward path declineth soon,
But she shines not the less.

And if she faintly glimmers here,
And paled is her light,
Yet alway in her proper sphere
She's mistress of the night. 36

We read another beautiful example of Thoreau's adoration to the moon:

The moon now rises to her absolute rule,
And the husbandman and hunter
Acknowledge her for their mistress.
Asters and golden reign in the fields
And the life everlasting withers not. 37

To some people the moon is male and to others the moon is female. The Indian people made a beautiful formula by which it can represent both male and female. Candra is the moon and he is the lord of the *tārakā* (stars). But moonsheen is Candrika, a female. In the *Mahābhārata* there is a great legend about the mischievous tactics of the moon. Tārā, the star girl, was the wife of the great guru Bṛhaspati whose disciples were all *devas*. One day Tārā, the love-lorn wife of the great guru, went for a sojourn and met the greatest of all lovers, Candra. Gurus are not charming to a woman, especially when they sit all night in meditation. Fed up with such boredom Tārā accepted Candra's hospitality. Finding his company very loveable, she did not return to Bṛhaspati. After a few nights the guru found out that Tārā was missing so he sent his disciples in search of her. It is well known that the moon rules the heart. This happened so strongly to Tārā's heart. She decided not to leave Candra. As the guru had all the shining ones of the heavens on his side, he declared war

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on Candra. But the infatuation of love is such that a lover will make no compromise. Śukra, the guru of the demons and the god of semen, insisted that Candra wage war with Bṛhaspati because all is fair in love and war. Love always brings enigmatic situations. When Candra was offended, no one could love. As he was in charge of medicinal herbs, no physician could treat anyone. So the creator himself came and pleaded with Tārā to return to her guru-husband. But there was a problem - she was pregnant. The guru of the *devas* insisted that the child was his. But Tārā told the whole world that the child was Candra's. So Brahma had to dissuade the guru from making any claim. The child was returned to the moon. Only those who read all these names in Sanskrit can fully appreciate the implied symbolism.

When King Edward VIII, the Duke of Windsor of England, fell in love with a non-regal divorcee, the Parliament of great Britain, the British Royal Family and all loyal Britishers pleaded with him to withdraw from that love. Then he gallantly said "The heart has its own reasons." To him the moon was his honey and he was willing to share that honey with all those who love the moon.

Mantra 8

Iyam vidyut sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyai vidyutaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasyām vidyuti tejomayo'mṛatamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam taijasastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo' yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

Iyam - this; *vidyut* - lightning; *asyai vidyutaḥ* - of this lightning; *asyām vidyuti* - in this lightning; *taijasaḥ* - identified with light (manifest in the skin)

This lightning is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this lightning. This shining immortal person who is in this lightning is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all

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beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

Compared to human life on earth, the sun in the sky and the firm ground under our feet will be there for several millennia after our exit and they were there even before our arrival. Living beings have a short span of life, yet through a process of physical proliferation, mental clinging to the past and expectations of the future we make ourselves immortal in principle. There are two glaring facts of life - the eternal *(nitya)* and the transient *(anitya)*. The most transient experience of humanity is that of witnessing the lightning. When the sky is overcast and everything is dark, seeing a sudden flash of lightning is very enjoyable. It has in it an abruptness that brings a high sense of wonder. It makes a profound contrast to its dark background. Cardinal Newman sings "Lead me on O kindly light, amidst the encircling gloom. I do not ask for the distant scene, Only one step before me." It is in answer to such a prayer that lightning comes. Lightning in the dark is also comparable to a sudden flash of hope in a depressed or dejected mind. Thus *vidyutt* or lightning is horizontally the most transient of experiences yet vertically is an eternally adored value of prime importance to us.

In the present mantra lightning is considered to be honey to our skin and our skin a honey to all beings. In his *Seven Mysteries of Life*, Guy Murchie makes the following reflections on the skin, relating it to the vital breath *(prāṇa)* on which we depend for all the electrical and magnetic functions in the body. He says:

> One does not usually think of skin, which one sloughs off relatively easily, as a vital organ, but skin, in fact, is the largest as well as the most versatile organ of the body. It holds our liquid flesh (two-thirds water) in one piece and shields it against crippling blows, microbial and chemical invasions, heat, cold, searing ultraviolet sun rays, and at the same time regulates blood flow, excretes waste, houses the sense of touch and is one of the most important means of sex attraction. Further, the same tissue that becomes skin, differentiates in other places and in other animals into hair, nails, scales, claws, hoofs, horns, quills, beaks and feathers, all using

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the collagen molecules in the required crystalline patterns, the softer varieties regenerating damaged parts so quickly and automatically that we take the act for granted as healing and usually forget that without such self-repair we might have great difficulty in surviving even a year. The full subtlety of skin, moreover, cannot possibly be appreciated without studying it microscopically, when every part of the body is seen to be covered by skin of a different specialized texture, every individual possessing his unique fingerprints and patterns, his two million hair and sweat glands, his surface nerves, blood capillaries or, in small lungless creatures like the earthworm a sievelike velum that "breathes" oxygen directly to the blood.

Oxygen being not only vital but by far the most prevalent constituent element in the animals of Earth, as it is in the surface of the planet itself, a terrestrial body must have ample access to the oxygen it requires. In microscopic creatures like protozoans, therefore, oxygen diffuses readily through the delicate cellular integument, round worms (as I've said) breathe through their whole skin, insects have networks of tiny windpipes called spiracles that convey oxygen to all their tissues (none more than half an inch from the surface) and larger animals, if living in water, have evolved gills to filter oxygen from that liquid or if on land, lungs to extract oxygen from the atmosphere by a rather incredible air-conditioning system analogous to an inverse tree of vapor whose branches spread inward within the body from a trunk connected to the sky outside.

The "leaves" of this lung tree are called alveoli, microscopic airsacs that sprout from "twigs" or bronchioles that stem from bronchi branching off the trunklike wind pipe that carries air through the nose and throat. There are some 300 million alveoli in the normal human lung, which tremendous number is needed, as are leaves on the tree, to provide enough surface to enable the proprietary organism to breath at a livable rate." 38

Now when we come directly to a physical understanding of electricity which is the main content of *vidyuti* we can simply de-

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scribe it as an electrical discharge. It implies two reciprocal factors - the electrical and the magnetic. The fundamental constant, the velocity of light in empty space, appears in the relation between electrical and magnetic phenomena so that both cannot be simultaneously related to mechanical units by dimensionless constants. The electrical unit is measured in ESU, electrostatic units, and the magnetic is measured in EMU, electromagnetic units.

In the context of the *Upaniṣad* we have to think of a wider field where the electrical and the magnetic are understood in the living terms of everyday life such as love and hatred, attraction and repulsion. We all know how different gadgets like fans, heaters, typewriters and computers are animated by electricity. Electrical charge is the passing of electrical current caused by electromotive forces. When we speak of lightning *(vidyut)* that happens between living beings such as husband and wife, child and parent, a dog and its master, the pussy cat that craves fondling and the flowering bush loved by the gardener, we can clearly see how there is a flow of electromotive forces between these counterparts in the context of love and care. Almost invisible but quite effective lightning and flows of electric current are being effected in our everyday concern for our loved ones. We can even see an excess of it in our very many antics of love.

This is certainly not to be understood, as the old world physicist thought, in the pattern of the flowing of an electric fluid from one body to another. This archaic view was later corrected by H.A. Lorentz and J.J. Thompson with the theory of a flow of negative charges (electrons) through the porous structure of the conductor. Later it was discovered that in electrolysis and in an electrical discharge in a gas, positive ions move toward the cathode and negative ions move toward the anode. An electric current can also consist of a stream of electrons in a vacuum. Later there were more advanced discoveries about electrical current. A subtle kind of current called displacement current was first understood by James Clerk Maxwell who recognized that a variable electric field in space produces the same magnetic effects as a current whose density is proportional to the time rate of change of the electric field. Such currents can exist in empty space, without any transfer of charge through that part of space, so long as the electric field intensity varies with time. If we interpolate this description of the electromagnetic field into the human

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mind, we can easily see that we carry within us many such spaces where our desires, imaginations and dreams are all spouting love forces of all kinds and reacting to those around us, without causing any awareness in them about what we feel about them.

The physicist knows the electric field in which an excitation is produced in space by a electric charge. However the nature of that excitation is unknown to the physicist. It is exactly here that the philosopher, mystic and natural psychologist enter and try to understand the electromagnetic field of love and hate to which all of us are subjected. Every day we experience the phenomenal pull and push of the several crosscurrents of our mentation. These charges are triggered in us by value citations such as of food, sex, love for monetary opulence, attraction to natural abundance, the zest to exercise power over others, and the greed to establish the monopoly of possession. In other words, the complementary spiritual and subtle aspects of the physical electromagnetic field are to be conceived as the humanist counterpart of the mechanical study of electromagnetism. To know the subtle and spiritual counterpart it is advantageous to attack the problem from the avenues of mechanical science which will automatically guide us to make deeper probes by examining the biological implications of attraction and repulsion. Thereafter this study is to be supplemented with a study of nerves and the implications of psycho-biology and electrophysiology.

Lightning seems to occur very far from us. Only when we turn to a serious study of nerve impulses do we find that it is happening all the time in our own bodies. Guy Murchie, whom we have already quoted about skin, speaks of nerves, too:

> The physiology of the nerve impulse itself has always been very hard for researching scientists to comprehend, being at least as mysterious and complex as lightning, which interconnects clouds and Earth, and, if anything, even more abstract. Like lightning, the impulse in effect generates itself, forming a transient wave of electrical excitation that advances the length of a nerve fiber, which is comparable to an insulated wire yet contains a low-resistance core of potassium ions enclosed in a high-resistance, porous membrane surrounded by sodium ions. The insulating membrane . . . does not block the flow of electricity completely but rather serves as a varia-

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ble filter, a sophisticated and sensitive switch that, in a precise pattern, allows current to leak between the negatively charged potassium ions within and the positively charged sodium ions without. In fact it is the advancing front of this current (exchanging potassium ions for sodium ones) that constitutes the moving wave of the nerve impulse, the abstract something that conveys its message at an average potential of .13 volts and a speed that has been clocked all the way from 2 mph in the case of a one-twenty-five-thousandth-inch-thin, eighty-year-old, visceral nerve to 285 mph in a one-hundreth-inch-thick, young, spinal cord nerve cell. And there is even evidence that a comparable impulse can travel in vegetable tissue under certain conditions, and possibly in minerals - these being just two more examples of the universal capacity of matter to respond to the world, to react, relate and be alive. 39

We know that all our love and hate complexity is directly related to the chemistry of our blood content and also the chemical function relating to our own nerve impulses. Dr. Wiersma, in the *Embodiments of Mind* says:

> Even within a single neuron itself, there is unquestionable chemical specification, the metabolic reactions of nerve cells being different from those of the nerve fibers which come from the nerve cells. One prefers glucose as fuel and the other glycogen. Cortex is inhibited differentially more by iodo-acetic acid and medulla by malonate. And even in degenerative diseases, the absence of one of the vitamin B compounds leads to degenration in the cell bodies of a sensory neuron group, the fiber degenerating only secondarily; an absence of another of the B components leads to degeneration of the fibers, with the cell bodies only secondarily showing disturbance. 40

The most vital function of our body mechanism to keep us alive and functioning with cheerful disposition comes from the rhythmic excitation of the heart. Most cardiac fibers have the capability of self-excitation, a process which can cause automatic rhythmical contractions. This is especially true of the fibers of

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the heart's specialized conducting system; the portion of this system that displays self-excitation in to the greatest extent is the fiber of the sinoatrial (S.A.) node of the heart. For this reason the sinoatrial node ordinarily controls the rate of the beat of the entire heart. The sinoatrial fibers are somewhat different from most other cardiac muscle fibers having a resting membrane potential of only -55 to -60 millivolts in comparison with -85 to -95 millivolts in most of the other fibers. This low resting potential is caused by a natural leakiness of the membranes to sodium ions. It is also this leakage of sodium that causes the self-excitation of the S.A fibers.

When we discuss all these factual details which can be supplied to us by biophysics, biochemistry and electrophysiology, a deeper and more vital issue is waiting to be discussed. According to William Uttal:

> The problems of epistemology (the theory of the methods of acquiring knowledge) and metaphysics (the theory of the nature of reality) are intricately intertwined with the mind-body issue. Indeed, the history of these sciences is so entangled with the mind-body issue that it is often difficult to be sure which issue is actually being discussed. A simple way to keep the three issues separate is to acknowledge that the task of epistemology is a strategic one - how to go about acquiring knowledge about reality. The task of metaphysics is a substantive one - What is the nature of that reality? The mind-body problem, however, is a more circumscribed issue dealing specifically with the relationship between mental experience and the bodily mechanisms that might underlie it. 41

In Western science we move from the circumlimited fragments of objectified material facts to a logical matrix which may or may not take us to the ultimate meaning of life. In the Indian tradition our starting point is the primordial generality of a fundamental base and, from that, we descend to the here and now stimulation, arousal and maintenance of the prevailing state in which the mechanical, chemical, physiological and biological implications come from the teleologic and purposive intent of the spirit that lives and breathes through the entire gamut of life. The Indian source books that deal with the basics of *vidyutt* are

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chapters in Caraka, Suśruta and Vāgbhaṭa on *Vāyu* (in *The Basic Principles of Ayurveda)* and in the *Abhidharma Kośa Bhāṣya.*

When we first thought of lightning which does not last for more than two seconds we never thought that the subject was so extensive. Here is a case where we ourselves become a honey comb and every cell has in it a storage of honey to which both living and non-living beings have a rightful claim.

Mantra 9

ayam stanayitnuḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asya stanayitnoḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasmin stanayitnau tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam śābdaḥ sauvarastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *stanayitnuḥ* - thunder-cloud; *asya stanayitnoḥ* - of this thunder-cloud; *asmin stanayitnau* - in this thunder-cloud; *śābdaḥ* - identified with sound; *sauvaraḥ* - identified with the voice

This thunder-cloud is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this thunder-cloud. This shining immortal person who is in this thunder-cloud is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as voice in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman.* This is all.

The rain cloud is the harbinger of life. Different people relate to clouds differently. The poet is fond of the morning and evening clouds which come like decorations of the East and West. They are arranged in the evening sky like festoons with varying

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colors of golden hue changing into vermillion and crimson. In the morning sky, from a deep magenta the clouds change into gold and then silver. As we watch clouds, the moods they undergo create similar sympathetic moods in us also. The affective quality of clouds is such that they create a lyrical beatitude in the viewer. One can be filled with a rich sense of poetry even if he or she cannot express it in adequate words. If such a sight is seen by an artist, he is sure to immortalize it with the pigments that are available to him. The poet does not want to wait for a canvas or colors. In whatever language she speaks, like a conjurer, she can find words which have the same mellowness, color, flexibility and movement as the cloud so that she can capture that moment to remain thereafter in the history of events as a great moment of happiness. During summer days, clouds change into snow-white lambs and flock under the blue canopy of the sky as if they want to graze on the thin air. They do not walk like sheep but float as if it is a dream time for the sky. The aesthetic quality of the cloud is indescribably vast.

After his seeds have been sown, the farmer looks prayerfully into the sky. To him, the clouds are his life-giving benevolence. He has no way to bring down the cloud as a sumptuous rain to the garden into which he has sown the promise of his future. All that he can do is look again and again into the sky and make ardent prayers to the blessed lord. Indian people believe that Mitra, the friendly god, is sitting right in the heart of any person who prays. Mitra instantaneously relays the message to the rain god Varuṇa. Although this sounds like wishful thinking or a mythical superstition, any person who sincerely trusts one's intimacy with nature can find the prayer coming true if the supplication is genuine. For the man in the sea, the cloud is his closest relative, telling him how to maneuver his ship and warning him when he should not take it out of port into the open sea. For the man of the desert, it's a luxury to see the cloud so he fills his conceptual heavens with clouds hanging low to whisper the good news of the rain to the parched leaves of the palm tree.

When we think of every drop that is brought to the mountain ranges, the lowlands and even to a tiny blade of grass that cannot move from its place to get a sip of water, we see the benevolent cloud as a conscientious divine distributor who has a direct concern for the life of all, whether ant or bug, dog or deer. For all living beings the essence of life is water. The good earth is

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clothed in the white crested waves of the blue ocean. The deepest aspiration of the ocean is to rise into the sunlit sky and be free from the salty sea where the waves are mercilessly beating each other. Out of the briny sea the purest nectar of water is carried over hills and dales to great distances and equitably distributed. This is something all of humankind's innovations have not been able to accomplish. Thus literally every drop of rain that comes is a honey which the rain cloud is lavishly giving.

The yogis of India are familiar with a musical note which they always hear within them. It has some resemblance to the Indian tambura which is played as a backdrop to Indian classical music. This is the music of the body and the soul which is called the *anāhata*. The gentle and harmless creatures which have been singing a similar melody of inner joy are the frogs of all sizes who are seen wherever there is water. When the rainy season starts in India these gentle creatures climb from their watery home and sit, sometimes in a row like Meistersingers, and start their croaking which has a high musical quality, both of rhythm and harmony. The morning and evening chants of the Vedic *brāhmaṇās* were jokingly compared to the croaking of the frogs by their humorous contemporaries. Even today the natural music which people enjoy in the countryside is that of the frogs. In some other countries like Australia and the United States, one can hear similar programs of the cicada. In India the peacock, the snake and several other rodents and birds are fond of singing and dancing on seeing rain clouds above, so it is no wonder that human poets also sing the praises of the rain cloud. Many are the poets who have given their heart-felt thanks to the voice of the cloud which has spoken to them with the mystical sounds of rumbling. Shakespeare saw the generosity of the rain cloud as an apt symbol of mercy:

> The quality of mercy is not strain'd.
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown.
> His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
> The attribute to awe and majesty,
> Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

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But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. 42

What Shakespeare is to Western literature, Kalidasa is to Indian literature. In his *Ṛitusaṁhāra*, study of the seasons, there are many verses of the poet's reflection on the rain and clouds. Here are a few verses freely rendered as an intentional translation:

The cloud, drunk with rain nectar,
holds aloft his radiant flash.
He has his band of merry-makers, too,
beating the kettle drums of rumbling thunder.
How majestic he is in his dignified gait.
O, ye water addicts on earth,
here is your fiance to green your dreams.

Spreading a blue garment
with patterns of ash and gray,
then like a whimsical woman,
suddenly going into twists and twirls
as if the confused elephants of the heavens
are all let loose.
All on a sudden, bulges of white clouds
hurry into the pavilion as if the heavens
have enchanting breasts which are about to drip.

They do see that every living creature on earth
is transformed into a horn bill.
With their parched throats,
they cannot even cry their supplication.
The tenderness of the clustering clouds
will even put to shame any mother's compassion.
They are planning to share
their honey of rain with everyone.

Is it a war or what?
Electrical bows are held firm

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in unison with the blasting thunderstorm.
Streaks of water shoot from above
like merciless arrows to drive away the demons of drought
who have already stricken fear
in the panicky hearts of earthly toddlers.

The Japanese people are super-sensitive in their admiration for subtle forms of beauty and expressions of love. Here are some beautiful haiku which refer to the glory of raindrops. Issa, one of the most celebrated poets of Japan sings:

This world is but a single dewdrop, set
Trembling on a stem; and yet...and yet... 43

Here is dear old Basho who speaks of his revelation:

The gloomy storm clouds crumble, and behold!
The mountain in the moonlight, clear and cold. 44

Sekitei writes:

The winds toss up into the stormy vault
The large white hailstones, where they somersault. 45

Dear darling Shelley wrote the following in 1820 on the cloud:

I bring fresh showers for the thirsty flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the Sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,

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And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over Earth and Ocean with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains.
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
whilst he is dissolving in rains. 46

One of the poetic consciences of our own day is Robert Bly. In the anthology he collected of poems of twofold consciousness, he included a beautiful selection of Kenneth Rexroth's from the book *Mary and the Seasons:*

Two days ago the sky was
Full of mares' tails. Yesterday
Wind came, bringing low cigar
Shaped clouds. At midnight the rain
Began, the first fine, still rain
Of autumn. Before the rain
The night was warm, the sky hazy.
We lay in the field and watched
The glowing October stars,
Vega, Deneb, Altair, high,
Hercules and the Crown setting,
The Great Nebula distinct
Through the haze. Every owl
In the world called and made love
And scolded. Once in a while
We would see one in the sky,
Cruising, on wings more silent
Than silence itself, low over

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The meadow. The air thickened.
The stars grew dim and went out.
The owls stopped crying in the wood.
Then the rain came, falling so
Gently on the tent we did
Not notice until a slight
Breeze blew it in on our faces.
At dawn it was still raining.
It cleared as we cooked breakfast.
We climbed through tatters of cloud
To the east ridge and walked through
The dripping, sparkling fir forest.
In the meadow at the summit
We ate lunch in the pale sun,
Ever so slightly cooler,
And watched the same long autumn
Mares' tails and came back down the
Steep rocks through the soaking ferns. 47

Such is the glory of the rain. In this mantra the rishi makes the plea that we should both give and receive the honey of blessedness which comes to us as gentle rain. Every sensitive person graced with common sense will readily agree that our clouds should not confuse our neighbor and we should be able to clear off everybody's clouds of confusion with the spontaneous rain of our blessings.

Mantra 10

ayamākāśaḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyākāśasya sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasminnākāśo tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam hṛdyākāśastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *ākāśaḥ* - space; *asya ākāśasya* - of this space; *asmin ākāśo* - in this space; *hṛdi* - in the heart;

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ākāśaḥ - identified with space

This space is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this space. This shining immortal person who is in this space is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells in the body as the space in the heart is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

In this mantra our attention is called to the universal *ākāśa* and also to *hṛdyākāśaḥ*. Countless millions of stars are contained in space. Because of its magnitude, the astrophysicist is reluctant to say whether space is infinite or not. The very concept of the infinite has a corroding effect on the power of mind to stretch beyond a conceptual space to speculate about what is beyond and what is beyond the beyond. Physical space is considered to be an empirical, measurable entity, whether it is a millimeter long or a trillion miles away. There are now devices which can locate the position of neighboring galaxies and even galaxies in formation. All our previous concepts of the extension of space have now been exploded. It is into that space we are asked to look when the *Upaniṣad* says "this space."

Along with it, we are asked also to consider the space in the heart. The reference to the heart is certainly not to the blood-pumping machine with two auricles and two ventricles which are always so filled with blood that there is hardly any space left over. The space of the heart is similar to what Jesus called the Kingdom of God. Or it can be understood as the space in which dream allows all kinds of visual, auditory and tactual fantasies to be presented. In a general sense we can say one is physical space and the other is psychological space. In any case we have to make ourselves familiar with a conceptual spatial picture so that we can tackle it as a reality of life.

Suppose you say, "zero." Does it occupy space? As zero is represented by a circle, at least in your mind you have to conceive of the drawing of a circle. After drawing a circle, how much space is left outside it in your mind? What is the dimension of the inside of the zero? One will soon get confused if one goes on

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with this kind of experimental meditation on the space which the zero is allowed to occupy. Suppose you imagine a zero as big as a mustard seed and another a million times bigger than the sun. Will your mind break trying to mold itself into both the mustard seed circle and the circle a million times bigger than the sun? No such thing will happen. Then what is the space we speak of? Is it a misnomer? It looks as if the space occupied by these two circles is not in space. It is only the verbal expression of two ideas. Suppose you count one, two, three, twenty, fifty, one hundred, one thousand. Then suppose you don't just count but also put the token of sheep in your enumeration: one sheep, two sheep, etc. If you say twenty thousand sheep, how much space will that occupy? But do you experience that difficulty if you abstract the enumerated sheep and write ten thousand or twenty thousand? That means we have experiences of space that is occupied and of theoretical space filled only with ideas. Since in that case both the space and the occupation are only ideas, there is no difficulty in interlacing the two. These are the many problems that have occupied the minds of great thinkers from time immemorial.

That which encompasses everything is the space in which it is placed. The highest freedom one can think of is to have enough space around so that one is not smothered. It is distressing to be smothered. People who are always busy and entrenched in the thick of work with many others putting pressure on them long to take a break and go to some open space like a lawn or garden or the seashore. In such places there are fewer forms to see and fewer names are suggested to one's mind. Even though one's life is parceled, capsuled or insulated within the package of one's skin, one can suddenly feel the vanishing of one's body outlines when one is surrounded by an adorable nothingness. This unknown, unnameable, intangible being of non-beingness is so soothing, so consoling, so caressing that one melts into it and forgets that one is a body recognized by others with a certain name.

At such a time, the inner core of your personal substantiality dissolves in the silence in which you submerge yourself. The infinitude of space breathes through you. Transactions go into silence and for some time even dream-like fantasies are not savored in your mind as anything to be relished. You are so satisfied by the unaccountability and indescribability of this silence which entwines you without smothering you. Compared to

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this silence, even a mist seems gross. It is in such a state your living space becomes the adorable reality into which your own truth has melted like a crystal in a solvent or wafted like the fragrance of a rose or jasmine on a passing breeze. You have only one word to describe it: *sukham*, the space that does not smother.

After becoming rested, relaxed, regenerated, if you return to your busy office of transaction or to the market place where buying and selling are done, or if it so happens that you are laid on a surgeon's table in an operating theater, space will have another meaning, another dimension. It caves in from all sides and you feel with anguish how even your smallest capillaries are pinched to the maximum. That is also to be understood as the space *(kham)* to which you have come to live, *dukham*. The *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* thus indicates the possible alternation of painful space *(dukham)* with delightful space *(sukham)*. Space can be basically understood as the most interiorized imperiential nebula of your spiralling growth and expansion into the weird and grotesque culmination of *samsāra* or the vertical spiralling which leads you from one level of freedom to another until you become a beacon of freedom for all. Then you may say that the sky that you see and the space in which you live are a modification of the creative, recreative, procreative and the benevolently folding and vanishing consciousness in which your being has its rhythmic throb and pulsation.

That potential to which the cause of everything can ultimately be traced is called *prājña*. *Prājña*, like a piece of cloth, can have many tucks and folds. Each twist and turn in it can have a static or dynamic replication of a frequency. At one level, without any stuff of creation, it can present itself in a space generated by a self-luminous light donated by the Self. Or it can be the space of the dream which can shrink into a painful snake pit of anguish with the utmost threat of a nightmare. Or it can spread itself in its own inherent infinitude into such vastness of beauty and harmony that it can even transcend all the limits of the imperfections of memories and lavish upon one a feeling of celestial blissfulness. Seekers of lyrical visions consider it most fortunate when they have the ability of a Vyāsa, Vālmīki, Kālidāsa or Bhāsa, Shelley, Wordsworth, Emerson or Whitman to go into the flights of poetic fantasy. In those visions, we know that the *ākāśa* is entirely generated out of nothing. There is no time or

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space there. There is no substance which is fashioned into persons, objects, homes, parks, battlegrounds, etc. Everything comes from *prājña* alone. The non-modulated *avyākṛta* or *prājña* has in it a holographic magical atmosphere which changes from moment to moment. Out of the awkward the concord of forms can be presented. When master writers dip their pens in the magic ink of creative imagination, they create immortals out of this non-moment and non-space. Creatures born of such special pens generate a sky of social significance in which the King Lear of William Shakespeare, Anna Karenina of Leo Tolstoy, Jean Christophe of Romain Rolland and many other immortals thrive.

Several accounts of *prājña* as the seed from which this inestimable space, both of outer and inner dimension has come, are given in the *Aitareya, Kena, Chāndogya, Praśna, Maitri, Muṇḍaka* and *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣads*. Whether scientists, poets or philosophers, there is no one who is not intrigued by the blue dome above us. Narayana Guru presents it in his *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* as a primary magic of the world creation:

> Existing outside and, as specific modes, seen within,
> the five elements, like sky, when contemplated,
> should become like waves rising in rows
> from the treasury of the watery deep,
> without any separate reality whatsoever.

There are mystical, philosophical, and scientific explanations of the non-being which presents the greatest drama of breadth and variegation. Many books on space have been published by the wise of every country. Henri Bergson has written the subtlest of thoughts on this issue; his writings naturally lead to the concept of the time-space continuum in Albert Einstein's vision of relativity. The *Holographic Paradigm* edited by Ken Wilbur is a fascinating book on this subject.

We are asked to give ourselves entirely to the honey of the eternal space. That can be done in the sweetest way by never smothering anything or anyone. Narayana Guru says, "The one religion towards which all beings, humble or gifted, are always moving, is to arrive at this blessed space where you breathe nothing but freedom."

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Mantra 11

ayam dharmaḥ sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu. asya dharmasya sarvāṇi bhūtani madhu; yaścayamasmin dharme tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ. yaścāyamadhyātmam dhārmastejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ. ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *dharmaḥ* - this intrinsic potential; *asya dharmasya* - of this intrinsic potential; *asmin dharme* - in this intrinsic potential; *dhārmaḥ* - identified with this intrinsic potential

This intrinsic potential *(dharma)* is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this intrinsic potential. This shining immortal person who is identified with this intrinsic potential is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who is identified with aspects of intrinsic potential in this body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

Two intrinsic considerations in the study of any science are relationship and the central value which monitors relationship. We are not just born and brought up in this world. We also belong to a social system in which there are many ramifications of essential considerations which we need to look into and adhere to in order to make our life on earth in the here and now relevant, valuable and leading to the next appropriate step. It is for this purpose that we want to know the kind of system to which each individual belongs. The system as a whole is based on a generic ground which is similar for all other constituent factors. So we can consider that one of the most essential characteristics of life is sharing. In a given situation each individual is expected to contribute something from his or her energy fund to the smooth functioning of the system. And, in return, he or she is eligible to

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receive from this implicit social contract an appropriate benefit to which he or she has a natural right. Every person is placed in a dialectics of the one and the many. Generality is the mark of the many; uniqueness is the mark of the one. Uniqueness is not just a single point of differentiation. There are many doors of admission to one's uniqueness.

For instance, if we take Tom, by simply hearing the name Tom, we do not know whether it is a machine, a dog, a cat or a human being. So we add Mister to Tom. That immediately excludes him from being a machine, a dog, a cat, etc. He has the uniqueness of a man which is a major differentia. Then if we further qualify Tom as the second son of the prime minister of Great Britain, we have excluded many people. This can be only one person. To identify him we can also show a recently taken photograph. We can make the specification very accurate by also presenting the thumb impression of his right hand. Now the individual has come to his exclusive seat of uniqueness. From that point, his intrinsic potential can be studied - how he developed it as a baby, as a child in school with his peers, through his education at Oxford and his degree in social anthropology, the special interest he showed in the Christian youth movement, how he came into conflict with the establishment when he was drafted for the war, the fact that he had to break away from his first girlfriend and pass through the agony of two unsuccessful marriages. All this shows that a person's *dharma* is not an easily identifiable mark on his forehead or a mole on his nose. If we look a little deeper into the causes of his failure with the first two marriages we find further complications in *dharma*. His first wife had in her certain kinds of profuse hormonal secretions which prompted her to have intense exercises of love-making, but he had a synaptic block which made it impossible for him to respond to the degree to which she wanted him to show his erotic virility.

Unless there is an existentialist encounter certain functional aspects of a person's intrinsic potential *(dharma)* will not reveal their special secrets. So it is no wonder that a person has to sit in waiting for hundreds of opportunities to reveal to him or her what is held in each pigeon hole of the substantiation of his or her personal peculiarities. That is an individual's personal problem. Society has no patience to find out exactly why a person cannot respond to the call of the hour which is seen only as a

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general law. Actually every person is an exception to everything in this world. Yet, by enhancing one's will-power to the maximum, one may succeed in tapping hitherto unknown genetic packets which were lying in the system unused for three or four generations. A genetic code which came from one's great great grand-parent may suddenly surface to save one's integrity. Studying the genetic code does not easily solve the problem because that science has more complications than any other field of biology. For some aberration or special brightness in the psychic awareness of a person it looks for a clue in the world of biochemistry.

It is so easy to say, "Be good, do good," but sometimes we give the sermon to Satan himself. Satan can be good only when he is Satan and can bring out his best only when he is commissioned to act as Satan. Between the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God, and the wild, cunning Satan, there is a whole range of species. It is difficult to know the specific brand to which you belong. In any case you can be a honey to your neighbor only when you recognize the common value which you both cherish and in what respect you relate to him or her. This gives you an opportunity every moment to change your life from chalk powder to pure honey or to the most poisonous gall. This is the challenge of life. You have not only to know your *dharma* but also the situation in which the call of *dharma* comes and all those who are along with you in the fray. From the Supreme Self that belongs to all to the very tip of your nails, *dharma* has its sway. You should be able to spread yourself, open up and be as extensive as this vast world of the cosmos. Then you should be able to gather yourself into the most efficiently functioning inner drive of a supervising monitor of your life. Every consideration should oscillate between the totality and the inclusion of yourself in it as the recipient of the gains of your *dharma*. Then all is well and good. That is how *dharma* becomes honey to all and all become honey to *dharma*.

Mantra 12

idam satyam sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asaya satyasa sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasmin satye tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam sātya-

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stejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

idam - this; *satyam* - truth; *asya satyasya* - of this truth; *asmin satye* - in this truth; *satyaḥ* - identified with truth

This truth is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this truth. This shining immortal person who is in this truth is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

In the Sanskrit language there are two words for truth. One is *yathārtha* and the other is *paramārtha*. *Yathārtha* means a thing is how it is. That means at a given time in a given place we can perceive an object which can be either a person or a thing or even an event. For all practical purposes in our wakeful transactions, we give the testimonial of perception a public validity. That validity comes through a certitude of perception such as direct seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling. In all these there is the possibility of sharing with all other persons who are in possession of functionally correct perceptual mechanisms. This has been chronicled in history as the day to day events of the world. The validity of perception and the fact that it has not been contradicted by those who participated in the experience gives the same validity to whatever has been historically recorded. What we perceive is an object, a body that has a form, a shape and other physical properties such as a three-dimensional exactitude. Therefore, autonomous reciprocal functions are all considered to be empirically real and ontologically valid.

This aspect of truth called *yathārtha* can be safely translated into English as factual truth. In the word "fact" there is an implied suggestion of the possibility of an action. In Sanskrit we

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may call it *prayojanam* meaning it can serve a utility. At a transactional level, if the truth of a thing cannot be converted into its use value it is only a fiction. Therefore the empirical truth of the transactional world is measured not in terms of the integrity of shape and form which is preserved over time, but how that allows itself to be transformed into whatever meaningful form it is intended to be. For example, a bar of gold can be converted into rings or bangles or any other jewelry. The utility of gold is that it can be made into an ornament for physical decoration. It serves this purpose even though the bar of gold's form is altogether different. Therefore the truth with which we are familiar in the transactional world is evaluated in the here and now in terms of its use value. It belongs to a frame of reference which has a physico-chemical relevance, a time-space localization and the social significance of public agreement. For people at large all over the world, factual truth is the truth that governs their everyday life.

In spite of all the glory that we give to perceptual truth, the fact remains that the perceiver does not continue in a recognizable manner over time. The infant changes into a child, the child into an adolescent, the adolescent into a youth. The youth becomes a middle-aged person who becomes old and worn out, then finally a corpse. What is a seed today is tomorrow a sapling, then a tree of enormous size with its branches stretched out in all directions. Then it crumbles. Parts of it are changed into furniture or fire wood. Factual truth has a limited time-span of validity and the historical reality of the discerner of that truth only fills a small gap of time.

It is in contrast to this that we speak of the eternal truth. Life has evolved in this world through millennia. All through the evolution of life every creature that came into physical bodily functioning was experiencing life in and through its alternating rhythm. The embodiment of life always was from the life in a body manifesting itself to repeat the process through the perishable biologic stuff with repetitive formation and improvement. Thus the person sitting here and experiencing life has been doing the same through millennia and there was never a break in its continuity. Nothing is lost in spite of the withering away of all previous forms.

Three strands were present all through this biologic history. One was the experiencing of a certitude that the knower existed. It can be put either as Descartes said: "I know, therefore I exist;"

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or as Jean Paul Sartre said: "I exist, therefore I know." In both, the common ground of truth is existence. In Sanskrit it is said *sadevatat*. This *sat* aspect is both the eternal truth and the perennial truth. It is perennial like the grass which goes dry every summer but revives with the next rain. Like the phoenix resurrecting from its own ashes, its disappearance is only a device to come back with added strength. Its reality is therefore perennial. The three angles of a triangle add up to 180 degrees. Even before it is conceived by any human being, such a mathematical truth has a precision of its own which has been maintained through ages. That is an example of eternal truth. Eternal truth is called *paramārtha*. (*Artha* means meaning, *parama* means ultimate). One of the ultimate aspects of truth is existence. Truth has a light of its own by which it shines. However great is truth, if it is not known, it is as if it does not exist. Existence has to be substantiated by the subsistence of knowledge. The existential ground of the Self is considered to be its self-luminous consciousness called *cit*. In our unconscious functioning, innumerable laws are maintained by an autonomous system in areas which cannot be efficiently manipulated and manifested by wakeful consciousness. Therefore, all aspects of truth need not necessarily be presented to a mind of awareness. In fact, according to the Vedantins, what comes to the surface of consciousness is only an *ābhāsa*, a distortion of the physicality in the compounded whole of total existence. Just as we consider the wakeful state, dream state, deep sleep and the transcendent all as aspects of mind, truth has several degrees of representation and several areas of obscurating. This is the second aspect - *cit* or the conscient.

In the transactional world truth is validated in terms of restoring the truthful to its ground and source of unity, which is experienced as a state of harmony or beatitude. This is called *ānanda*. The supreme truth is the generic unity of existence, knowledge and bliss. Experiential truth emphasizes the specific forms of existence, knowledge and factual use on an item by item basis. Thus truth *(satyam)* has a generic aspect and a specific aspect. The mystic and the philosopher seek the general and the fundamental. In daily transaction the lay person looks for the ontologic which is significant to him or her in the here and now. The person of realization puts both in a bracket and transcends the duality. Apart from this, there is a whole range of fallacy arising from erroneous perception, erroneous conception - wrong-

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ly interpreting the perception - and an inestimable world of non-perceived truth that constitutes the world of ignorance. In Sanskrit it is called both *asatya* and *pratibhāsa*. Considering all this, Narayana Guru gives the following verses in his *Advaita Dipika* to revalue Vedānta:

It is, it is not; thus alternate both
the convictions of non-being and of being -
this is the nature of beginningless darkness;
when both are critically examined there is no non-being;
in a piece of rope there is no snake, rope alone is. (6)

With affirmation after affirmation
what finally comes to stand above all is the one truth;
everything transient is unreal; when inquired into,
the modifications of earth are unreal
and the one earth that is existent in all is alone real. (7)

In truth there is no world;
everything appears as before even after
the discrimination is well established;
even after it becomes certain that there is no water
in the desert, it appears to be as before. (10)

To the wise, truth is the world
and consciousness is happiness in itself;
there is no joy in the unreal -
this is not evident to the ignorant;
to one who sees, the shining orb is delightfully existent -
to the blind the sun is dark void. (11)

Happiness is existence; that is one with consciousness;
to think of oneself as separate -
that has no existence and cannot be conscious;
everything is untrue; water of the mirage,
blue of the sky, flower of the sky;
ultimately, when contemplated, sky alone is. (15)

With this conviction, Narayana Guru in his *Universal Prayer* defines the Absolute in a form of adoration:

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You are existence, knowledge and the endeared value; you yourself are the present, the past and the future; when considered, you are none other than the articulated word also.

It is in recognition of the apparent truth of the perceptual world that we were previously asked in this *Upaniṣad* to say "not this." On reconsidering what is rejected we see the Absolute in its full measure, revealing through everything relative. Then we deny what is denied and in its place we find the truth of truth *satyasya satyam*. What you have renounced a moment before now becomes honey to you and reciprocally you become honey to the very world you have renounced.

Mantra 13

idam mānuṣam sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asya mānuṣasya sarvāṇi bhūtani madhu; yaścāyamasmin mānuṣe tejomayo'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamadhyātmam mānuṣastejomayo'mṛatamayaḥ puruṣaḥ, ayameva sa yo'yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

idam - this; *mānuṣam* - human-ness; *asya mānuṣasya* - of this human-ness; *asmin mānuṣe* - in this human-ness; *mānuṣaḥ* - identified with the human-ness (in the body)

This human-ness is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this human-ness. This shining immortal person who is in this human-ness is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

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Human-ness in its most comprehensive sense sums up the entire theme of the *Upaniṣad*. It commences with a primordial state of non-being and culminates in the perfection of the ultimate being which is one without a second. The method of developing the entire theme was indicated in the invocation of the *Upaniṣad: AUM pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate, AUM śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ*. The Upaniṣadic philosophy does not make a dichotomy of God and Satan. It commences with the idea of the Absolute. Whatever is, was and will be are all included in the Absolute. The Absolute has neither an outside nor an inside. So the rishi had no compunction in saying that in the beginning there was nothing. In other words, thingness was attributable to the cause beyond the cause. Thingness indicates a manifestation, materialization or objectification. All three are epistemologically denied by the term "nothing." When death comes, we suddenly go from thing-ness to non-thing-ness. Hence it was said that the nothing that was spoken of was the same as death. Death is the immanent and instantaneous transcendence of being.

Then came the first stir in the void - the death referred to at the beginning was not a static death, not a barren, impotent state. Instead it was a call for being. Therefore it was qualified as hunger. This is not to be understood as the hunger in a belly. If you put together every need you can think of, every possible hunger and thirst, a supreme state of need, then nothing can have more potential than this necessity that can move towards its fulfillment. If every need is met by its supreme fulfillment and all fulfillments can be seen as the perfection of a total being, that is what is indicated by *pūrṇam adaḥ*. That *pūrṇam* contains both the totality of necessity and the totality of fulfillment. It is the archetypal theme for manifestation. The reference here is to the beginning of the beginning - that which is beyond the present, the future and the past.

Then we come to the phenomenal manifestation of that as every need we experience, as every means for the fulfillment of those needs and the satisfactions ensuing from all fulfillments. The emphasis shifts from the causal plenum to the resultant plenum: "from that plenum this plenum came" - *pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate*. Then comes a rejection of the resultant plenum. Just as when the philosopher says *"neti,"* the result is magical. We are once again with the primordial plenum - *pūrṇsya pūrṇamādāya*

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pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate: "Even when the consequential plenum is subtracted or negated from the manifested plenum, the primordial plenum remains full and perfect." What was indicated in the invocation is worked out in the closing mantras of this *brāhmaṇa.*

This entire process is to be seen in the making of the human. To begin with there was neither he nor she nor a thing but nothing. Then the phenomena that was to be the human assumed the quality of want and necessity. This is still the hallmark of humanity. We are never satiated. We are always hungry. Even if the whole of earth is given to us, we want the moon also. The hunger of humanity is such that it will grow into the magnitude of the greatest curiosity ever expressed. Although it has no use for the mud on Mars it will stretch the hand of desire into outer space and grab a little of it. No wonder that the rishi of the *Īśāvāsya* said "Do not grab" - *māgṛdha.* We send our agents to all the planets around the sun and now we are meddling with the sun also. On sensing that there are galaxies outside ours, our hunger is now sniffing them. Was it improper for the rishi to say that the genetic code of the human race came from archetypal hunger *(vaiśvānara)*? In the course of the *Upaniṣad* we have studied the creative genius which consists of a three-fold function: to localize and specify, to make morphological classifications and to work out a course of creative expansion from the cause to the effect. These three are named in the *Upaniṣad* as baptizing, meaning *(nāma karaṇa)*, gestaltation, picturing the form *(rūpa karaṇa)*, and initiating action *(karma karaṇa)*. Before the advent of language its potential design arises in the cosmic manifestation. This is alluded to as the self-projection of laying the egg of hope *(hiraṇyagarbha)*. The coming of hunger *(vaiśvānara)* and the herald of the gospel of hope *(hiraṇyagarbha)* are the plus and minus in us. We hunger, then, with great effort, we find the fuel to assuage our hunger. Once we are fed we are satiated for a little while. Then again comes the recurrent hunger and the reciprocal creation of a new food.

In Semitic religions, God and Satan are separate. In the Upaniṣadic scheme of manifestation, God and Satan are two faces of the same reality. On the plus side it is *deva* and on the minus side it is *asura.* Until the competitive state of the plus and minus became intense, the problem-solving mechanism of the mind was pervasive in the *prajāpati.* Then the mind emerged as a central piece. Pushing *deva* on one side and *asura* on the other, the

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mind declared an independent personality structure. When such assertiveness of ego comes, "he" cannot be without a "she." It is in the very blood of the Indian to hold man and woman together as a *Śivaśakti* duo. Thus the myth says that *prajāpati* became *manu* and *śatarupa* and out of them came all species of beings from the crawling worm to the space-hungry human.

Credit goes to Carl Sagan who found out that the archaic, obsolete parent tools of creation which were in the very first forms of amoebas or the dragons of Eden have left a residue of their waste in the most modern of people. To understand humans, every form of life on earth is to be rolled together. This is not only true of the biologic world. Human beings are an essential summation of everything flourishing in the heavens and whatever is happening down below in the here and now. They can be filthier than the worst dirt and they can be purer than the most glorious vision of perfection. Like mocking birds they can imitate anything. They were previously only interfering with nature by copying it into their art. Now they have even become malicious to change the very art of creation with genetic engineering.

Thus the human is called at once god, *māyā* and devil, not in three separate blocks but so fascinatingly interlaced that if you take a sample smear and look at it through the eyes of comprehensive observation you can see the best of gems and worthless pebbles sitting side by side. Ever inspiring ideals of which a bard can sing sit next to the cunning of the most dubious conjurer of sin and malice. Ultimately, the final product of cosmic, spiritual, psychological, and bio-physical evolution has resulted in the humans who are everywhere. Only they know what honey is. Only they know how to poison everything. Hence it is most appropriate that the ultimate supplication is made to each person to be their brothers' and sisters' caretaker. Human beings have to keep the peace and solidarity of earth and all beings in it. This prayer from the *Upaniṣad* comes in the present day as the most opportune call for human beings to present themselves as honey to all and enjoy the truth and wisdom goodness of all as their own honey.

Mantra 14

ayamātmā sarveṣām bhūtānām madhu, asyātmanaḥ

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sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu; yaścāyamasmiṅnātmani tejomayo'mṛtamaya puruṣaḥ, yaścāyamātmā tejomayo-'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣaḥ; ayameva sa yo' yamātmā; idamamṛtam, idam brahma, idam sarvam.

Word Meanings

ayam - this; *ātmā* -(cosmic) body, *ayam ātmanaḥ* - of this (cosmic) body; *asmin ātmani* - in this (cosmic) body, *ayam* - this; *ca* - and; *ya* - which *ātmā* - (is) the (individual) self

This (cosmic) body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this (cosmic) body. This shining immortal person who is in this (cosmic) body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. This shining and immortal person who dwells as spirit in the body is honey to all beings and all beings are honey to this person. The Self is none other than this. This is the immortal. This is *brahman*. This is all.

The presentation of *ātman* in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is very similar to the Chinese concept of the Tao. In the Tao, yin is followed by yang. Similarly, in the *Upaniṣad*, hunger and death are followed by life and immortality. Cosmic hunger desires to have a mind. In the mind, fear transforms into hope. The mind pregnant with hope is *hiraṇyagarbha*. The realization of hope results in the *prajāpati*. Here there is no difference between *ātma* and mind. The very emergence of the *prajāpati* brought the most adorable and the worshipful. The *ātman* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* has three functional qualities. The first is breathing life. The second is the conversion of mind or self-awareness into thoughts which are an arrangement of meaningful words which can be sung with the dynamics of word power. This word power is the instrument of manifestation or creation. It is with the ascending logos of the cosmic breath that the *prāṇa* brought about the immortality of the Self. The third quality is the power of transforming the mortal into the immortal. These triple principles are afterwards designated in the *Upaniṣad* as existence *(sat)*, light of knowledge *(jyotis)* and immortality *(amṛtam)*.

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In the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*, the honey spoken of is the supreme wisdom that ensues from the science of the Absolute *(brahmavidyā)*. It is significant to notice here that the *madhuvidyā* was first imparted to the rishi Yājñavalkya as the *Śukla Yajur Veda* by Vājasaneya who appeared in the form of a white horse. The same was given a second time by the son of Atharvan, again with the head of a horse, to the divine physicians, Aśvins. Now for the third time it is presented as a dialogue between Yājñavalkya and his own disciple Maitreyī who was previously his darling wife. All these anecdotes have within them various symbols of transformation. In the very opening chapter the presentation of the sacrificial horse was given as a dramatic means of revising the entire Vedic concept of *yajña* or burnt sacrifice. In the *Upaniṣad*, *ātman* and *brahman* are treated as identical. This concept is presented at the very outset when the sacrificial horse is identified as a global figure covering the three regions of the universe - the heavens, the earth and the submarine world. The horse stands with its head held high in the sky where its face is the dawn and the eye is the sun. Its trunk is described as the atmosphere and the hooves of its feet are held firm in water. It stretches from the East to the West. Thus the Self is shown as the all-filling reality. This is as good as saying that *ātman* is *brahman*.

To enter into the science of *brahmavidyā* we are given a sufficient reason: whatever belongs to the elements earth, water and fire is perishable. The imperishable is the sky and the air belonging to sky. *Udgāna* was devised as a means to attain immortality. The same *udgāna* comes in Plato and, before him, in Heraclites' philosophy as the ascending *logos*. Thus, the perishing mortal born of the terrestrial substance can be changed into the immortal only with the musical power in which the word and the mind are coupled to sing the *chandas*. Three *udgīta's* are recommended by the *Upaniṣad*. The *praṇava* is the *udgāna* in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The prayer for resurrection from the non-Self to the Self *(asatomā sadgamaya)*, resurrection from darkness to light *(tamasomā jyotir gamaya)*, resurrection from death to immortality *(mṛtyormā amṛtam gamaya)* is further supplemented by the *gāyatrī* both in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Chāndogya*. So far as *ātmā* is concerned, music is its adoration when its word-content is a liturgy of praise of the supreme truth. The counter-part of the ascending logos is the descending logos which is described in the *Upaniṣad* as the path of the departed one *(pitṛs)*

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and the passage of the smoke *(dhūmamārga)* in which the phenomena of *samsāra* happens. All sciences pertaining to the here and now are considered as the science of the non-Self *(aparavidyā)*. The science of wisdom is *paravidyā* which is given in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* as *Vājasaneyi Brāhmaṇa*, taught by Atharvan to the Aśvins (Gemini) and finally given by Yājñavalkya as *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*.

In the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*, Maitreyī asks her guru, Yājñavalkya, to teach her the science by which she can attain immortality: *yenāham nāmṛtā syām kim aham tena kuryām?* - "By what can I attain immortality?" Then Yājñavalkya reveals to her that it is attained by listening to teaching about *ātman*, meditation on *ātman* and deeply pondering on the nature of *ātman*. He tells her that *ātman* is none other that the intensity of longing for the highest value that reveals itself as the ground of all values. He makes a distinction between this ground and the relativistic manifestation of values, such as the husband to his wife, the wife to her husband, the child to its parent, wealth to its owner, the *brāhmaṇa* to the worshipper of the *brāhmaṇa*, the *kṣatriya* to the dependent of the *kṣatriya*, the world to the people clinging to earth, the *devas* to worshipers of the *devas*, everything to those who desire everything. In all this, it is the same *ātman* that manifests as the desirable. That which is desired and the desired that is wholeheartedly received is further identified as the immortality of the Self which is like the honey of immortality.

Relativistic manifestation only gives one a false image of value. Hence that is to be rejected as "not this" *(neti)*. A further question comes. Is *neti* (rejection) the ultimate stance one should take? To this, another categorical answer is given: "not this" *(neti)*. Two negations make an affirmation, not of the first that is rejected, not of the second that is rejected, but of a holistic comprehension that includes all the relativistic positions within the ambit of the Absolute so that all counterparts are unitively recognized like the spokes of a wheel fitted into its hub. Such is the beautiful presentation of the Self given in this *brāhmaṇa*. This honey of immortality is such that when you die as a relativistic individual in the phenomenal world, you die to falsehood, ignorance and death and you stand, shining forth as the ever-existent, the eternally luminous and the truth of truth never again to be affected by the stain of duality.

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Mantra 15

sa vā ayamātmā sarveṣām bhūtānāmadhipatiḥ, sarveṣām bhūtānām rājā; tadyathā rathanābhau ca rathanemau cārāḥ sarve samarpitāḥ, evamevāsminnātmani sarvāṇi bhūtāni, sarve devāḥ, sarve lokāḥ, sarve prāṇāḥ, sarva eta ātmānaḥ samarpitāḥ.

Word Meanings

saḥ - that; *vai* - verily; *ayam* - this; *ātmā* - Self; *sarveṣām bhūtānām* - of all phenomenality; *adhipatiḥ* - (is) the inner controller; *sarveṣām bhūtānām* - of all phenomenality; *rājā* - governing principle; *tat yathā* - just as; *rathanābhau ca* - in the hub of a chariot wheel; *rathnemau ca* - and in the rim of a chariot wheel; *sarve* - all; *arāḥ* spokes; *samarpitāḥ* - (are) conjoined; *evam eva* - even so; *sarvāṇi* - all; *bhūtāni* - elements; *sarve* - all; *devāḥ* - shining principles; *sarve* - all; *lokāḥ* - worlds of interest; *sarve* - all; *prāṇāḥ* - channeling of *prāṇa*; *sarve* - all; *ete* - these; *ātmānaḥ* - (individual) selves; *asmin ātmani* - the Self; *samarpitāḥ* - (are) directed and ruled by

This same Self is the inner controller and governing principle of all phenomenality. Just as all the spokes of a chariot-wheel are conjoined to the hub and to the rim, even so are all the elements, all the shining principles, all worlds of interest, the channeling of *prāṇa* and all (individual) selves directed and ruled by the Self.

The first mantra of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* begins with *īśāvāsyam idam sarvam*. The two terms which are placed side by side in that mantra, *idam* and *sarvam*, are to be noticed with an insight which is epistemologically very significant. The first term, *idam*, means "this." When the cognitive faculty of mind experiences the inner disturbance of being roused with the presence of something that is to be inquired into, then alone comes the awareness of "this." As the cognitive faculty is a modification of the Self, the awareness of this presence is an interaction between

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the homogeneity of the unmodified Self and the heterogeneity of the modified self. It is because of this implied duality that the situation warrents focusing the critical light of the Self, in the present case, the reasoning intelligence, to examine what specific factor has come in the generality of consciousness. This is how the illuminating light which specifies a new encounter turns out to be a critically enquiring light *(vimarśa)*. It is that situation which we are referring to as "this" *(idam)*. In the course of a day and, in fact, throughout one's entire life, there are countless occasions of the cognitive faculty being assailed by similar experiences which all commence with the registry of "this." That is necessarily followed by the question "What is this?" If every item of "this" is brought under an all-inclusive generality which leaves nothing out, we call it *sarvam*. So *idam* and *sarvam* are the two poles of cognitive experience.

In the present mantra the relationship between *idam* and *sarvam* , "this" and "all," or "this" and "that" is given as a relationship of dependence, not of interdependence. "That," which includes all *(sarvam)* is independent *(svatantra)* and "this," which is a manifestation of the Absolute, is a dependent factor. If you look at a canvas of a great master which is a realistic painting of the sky, the sun, mountains, waterfalls, blue lagoons, white-washed houses, the greenery of the forest, multi-colored flowers of a garden, green lawn, reflections of earthly and heavenly bodies in the water, several dark shadows and bright and shimmering objects, it is one painting. At the same time, every figure and design in it varies from every other in form, color, tint and shade. Yet there is not one single point in the painting which has not come from the tip of the brush of the master artist and that has come from his sparkling consciousness. The single light of artistic awareness that presided in the inspired mind of the artist is now spread out as all. Thus there is an interrelationship between *sarvam* and *idam*, "all" and " this." You can say that in one sense, the artist made an offering of a touch of pigment on the canvas *(samarpaṇa)*. But that is only the general outcome of the painting, the holistic unity of a single piece of art. What is seen with the eye is both real and unreal *(sadasat vilakṣaṇam)*. Yet the beauty conceived in it, the joyous outcome of aesthetics, comes entirely from the *ānanda* aspect of consciousness.

Every idea is given an existential fixation, presented here as the spokes which on one side are fixed to the rim of the wheel-

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which is the spatio-temporal periphery of this magnificent world. The other end converges to the point from where the centrifugal outlay of the figure comes, here called the Self. It is given the appellations of inner controller *(adhipati)*, and governing principle *(rājā)*. To understand how it is the all-embracing dynamics of the individual functioning of every element in the world we should refer to the *Kena Upaniṣad*. In the third section of the *Upaniṣad* we read how nature's elemental gods such as Agni (fire), Vāyu (wind) and Indra (the lord of the shining hosts) thought that they were great rulers of the world. To correct their spiritual blindness and give them the insight of the Self that rules all, the Absolute appeared as a *yakṣa* and tested their strength. Agni failed in burning a blade of grass given by the *yakṣa*, Vāyu failed to blow it away and Indra failed to destroy it. While Indra stood confused, the most beautiful Umā appeared and revealed to the elemental gods that their strength came from *brahman*, the Absolute. The Self not only has the power to illuminate but also to energize, hence these two appellations, *adhipati* and *rājā*.

The mantra closes by saying that everything in this phenomenal world has a corresponding niche in the numinous truth. That is indicated by the wheel of the chariot which is a symbol of structural composition. The representation of the wheel is not a static scheme. It is, as Bergson put it, a *schema motor*. Both in Hindu and Buddhist symbolism, the wheel is suggestive of the cyclic continuity of the functional world. We read in the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao Tsu:

> Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;
> It is the center hole that makes it useful.
> Shape clay into a vessel;
> It is the space within that makes it useful.
> Cut doors and windows for a room;
> It is the holes which make it useful.
> Therefore profit comes from what is there;
> Usefulness from what is not there. 48

In Narayana Guru's *Darśana Mālā - Adhyāropa Darśana*, Verse Ten, we read how this grand universe is like a tree of amazing dimensions which was projected out of a single seed. However enormous it appears, it has resulted from seed power. He says, "That is Brahma the creator; that is Viṣṇu the preserv-

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er, that is Śiva the dissolver, that is *para*, the beyond, that is the all-embracing *sarvam* and that alone is." Such is the conclusion of the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*. *Ātmā* is described in the *Īśāvāsya* as that which remains immobile yet goes beyond the fast-moving. There is an enigmatic paradox in the Absolute. It is both the relishing consumer which enjoys everything as honey and it is also the relished honey of all. This is the closing mantra of the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa* which is followed by an addendum of three mantras.

Mantra 16

idam vai tanmadhu dadhyaṅṅārthavaṇo'śvibhyāmuvāca. tadetadṛṣiḥ paśyannavocat. tadvām narā sanaye daṁsa ugramāviṣkṛṇomi tanyatumna vṛṣṭim dadhyaṅ ha yanmadhvārthvaṇo vāmaśvasya sīrṣṇā pra yadīmuvāca itī

Word Meanings

idam - this; *vai* - verily; *tat* - (is) that; *madhu* - meditation on mutual aids; *(yat* - which); *dadhyaṅ* - Dadhyac; *ātharvaṇaḥ* - versed in the *Atharva Veda; aśvibhyām* - to the two Aśvins*; uvāca* - imparted; *ṛṣiḥ* - the seer; *tat* - that; *etat* - this (deed); *paśyan* - observing; *avocat* - said; *naraḥ* - O Aśvins in human form; *tanyatuḥ* - a cloud; *na* - as (Vedic use); *vṛṣṭim* - (reveals) rain; *vām* - of you both; *sanye* - for gain; *tat* - that; *ugram* - fearful; *daṁsaḥ* - deed called *daṁsa; āviṣkṛṇomi* - (I) will reveal; *yat* - (and how you acquired that) which; *madhu* - (was the meditation on) honey (mutual aids); *yat īm* - (and) which; *dadhyaṅ* - Dadhyac; *atharvanah* - versed in the *Atharva Veda; vām* - to you both; *aśvasya* - of a horse; *sīrṣṇā* - through the head; *provāca ha* imparted *itī*

This is verily that meditation on mutual aids which Dadhyac, versed in the *Atharva Veda*, imparted to the two Aśvins. Observing this deed, the seer said, "O Aśvins in human form, that fearful deed of yours for the sake of gain, called Daṁsa, I will reveal as a cloud does rain,

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(and how you acquired) that meditation on mutual aids which Dadhyac, versed in the *Atharva Veda*, imparted to you through a horse's head."

Mantra 17

idam vai tanmadhu dadhyaṅṅārthavaṇo'śvibhyāmuvāca. tadetadṛṣiḥ paśyannavocat. ārthavaṇāyaśvinā dadhīce-'śvayam śiraḥ pṛtyairayatam. sa vām madhu pravocadṛtāyantvāṁstram yaddasrāvapi kakṣyam vām. iti.

Word Meanings

aśvinā - O Aśvins; *ātharvaṇāya* - versed in *Atharva Veda; dadhice* - on Dadhyac; *aśvayam* - equine; *śiraḥ* - a head; *pratyairayatam* - (you) fixed; *dasrau* - O destroyers of enemy forces; *saḥ* - he; *ṛtāyan* - in fulfillment of his promise; *tvāṣtram* - relating to the sun; *madhu* - the meditation on mutual aids; *vām* - to you both; *pravocat* - imparted; *api* - (that) also; *yat* - which; *kaksyam* - (was) the secret meditation (relating to the self); *vām* - (he imparted) to you both; *iti*; (Rest as before.)

This is verily that meditation on mutual aids which Dadhyac, versed in the *Atharva Veda*, imparted to the two Aśvins. Observing this deed, the seer said, "O Aśvins, you fixed an equine head on (the shoulders of) Dadhyac, who was versed in the *Atharva Veda*. O destroyers of enemy forces, in fulfillment of his promise he imparted to you the meditation on mutual aids relating to the sun, as also the secret meditation on them (relating to the Self)."

Mantra 18

idam vai tanmadhu dadhyaṅṅārthvaṇo'śvibyāmuvāca. tadetadṛṣiḥ pasyannavocat. puraścakre dvipadaḥ purascakre catuṣpadaḥ, puraḥ sa pakṣī bhūtvā puraḥ puruṣa āviśat. iti. sa vā ayam puruṣaḥ sarvāsu pūrṣu puriśayaḥ;

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nainena kiñcanānāvṛtam, nainena kiñcanāsamvṛtam.

Word Meanings

dvipadaḥ - with two feet; *puraḥ* - cities, bodies; *cakre* - (he) created; *catuṣpadaḥ* - with four feet; *puraḥ* - bodies; *cakre* - (were) created; *saḥ* - that; *puruṣaḥ* - supreme being; *puraḥ* - first; *pakṣi* - a bird (the subtle body); *bhūtva* - becoming; *puraḥ* - the bodies, them; *āviśat* - entered *iti*; *saḥ* - that; *vai* - verily; *ayam* - this; *sarvāsu pūrṣu* - in all bodies; *puriśayaḥ* - on account of dwelling in the bodies; *puruṣaḥ* - (is called) *puruṣa; enena* - by it; *kiñcana* - anything; *anāvṛtam* - not enveloped; *na* - (is) not; *enena* - by it; *kiñcana* - anything; *asaṁvṛtam* - not pervaded; *na* - (is) not; (Rest as before.)

This is verily that meditation on mutual aids which Dadhyac, versed in the *Atharva Veda*, imparted to the two Aśvins. Observing this deed, the seer said, "Bodies were created with two feet and with four feet. That supreme being first entered them as the subtle body. As it dwells in all bodies, it is called *puruṣa*. There is nothing that is not enveloped by it, nothing that is not pervaded by it.

Mantras sixteen, seventeen and eighteen are a mythological narrative of the legends about the *Madhu Vidyā* given by Dadhyac the son of *Atharvan*, to the divine physicians, Aśvins, and later by rishi Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī. The philosophical importance of these three mantras is negligible. To avoid any break in the text, the mantras alone are presented here. The only comment we want to make is about the implied disadoption which intervenes between the Vedic period and the tradition of Vedānta. Anyone who studies the present tradition in North India can see that a discrimination is made between the first three Vedas - *Ṛg, Yajus* and *Sāma* - and the *Atharvan*. For all orthodox purposes, Vedists speak only of *Triveda*, three *Vedas*. Only when it is imperative do they admit that there is a fourth *Veda*. In fact, it was the first *Veda*. On that basis it is sometimes called the elder(*jyeṣṭha putra*). The *Atharvan* belonged to prehistoric India and can proba-

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bly be related to proto-Dravidian culture. In present day India a great attempt is made by Hindu orthodoxy either to hide the high spiritual and mystical values of the *Atharva Veda* or to re-write India's history as if there had been no Dravidian culture as such.

As we have noted, this *Upaniṣad* is a valiant attempt to show the real position of India's spiritual tradition. The *kṣatriyas* spoken of by the *Upaniṣad* are natives. Even India's greatest teachers, Vālmīki and Vyāsa, belong to the oldest stock of prehistoric natives who are nowadays called Girijans and Harijans. Vālmīki belonged to a hunter family, like tribes which still continue as forest dwellers *(girijans)*. Vyāsa, the son of a fisherwoman, can be easily identified by his name - Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa. *Kṛṣṇa* means "the dark-skinned native." India was previously called Jambūdvīpa. He being a native Indian, he is called *dvaipāyana*, the dweller of the island. *Vyāsa* means "a writer and a compiler." The credit for compiling and unifying the *Vedas* goes to Vyāsa. The spite between the Vedic *brāhmaṇas* and local *kṣatriyas* has already been projected in the very first chapter of this *Upaniṣad* and we do not want to go further into the political controversy which separates *Atharva Veda* from the other three *Vedas*.

The main contemplative *Upaniṣads* proclaiming Vedānta, such as *Māṇḍūkya, Praśna* and *Muṇḍaka*, belong to the *Atharva Veda*. So it is no wonder that even the divine physicians sought pure *brahmavidyā* from the mouth of Dadhyac, the son of *Atharva*. *Atharva* is not a proper name. It only indicates those who belong to the earlier strata of India's contemplative wisdom who were probably Dravidians or proto-Dravidians. Śankara himself, seeing the high quality of the Dravidian contemplative culture, tried to identify himself with it by calling himself *draviḍa śiśu* - the child of the Dravidians. He came to regret his earlier stance of Āryan supremacy and made amends by writing five verses of remorse in the *Manīṣā Pañcakam*. Further, he upheld the purity of guruhood by adopting Śiva as the supreme example of guru in his *Dakṣiṇā Mūrti Stotra*. The *brāhmaṇas* of South India who follow Śankara's tradition are known are *smārtas*, the worshipers of Śiva. In contrast to the *smārtas*, the tradition of the Vaiṣṇavas who follow Śri Rāmānuja began. The *smārtas* call themselves Ayyars and the Śri Vaiṣṇava followers call themselves Ayyangārs. If we look too far in that direction we will get distracted by India's disreputable political degeneration. So we do not want to

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make any further comment about this.

Mantra 19

idam vai tanmadhu dadhyaṅṅārthavaṇo'śvibhyāmuvāca. tadetādṛṣīḥ paśyannavocat. rūpam rūpam pratirūpo babhūva tadasya rūpam praticakṣaṇāya, indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa īyate yuktā hyasya harayaḥ śatā daśa. iti. ayam vai harayaḥ, ayam vai daśa ca sahasrāṇi, bahūni cānantāni ca; tadetadbrahmāpūrvamanaparamanantaramabāhyam, ayamātmā brahma sarvānubhūḥ, ityanuśāsanam. iti pañcamam brāhmaṇam

Word Meanings

rūpam rūpam - to each form; *pratirūpaḥ* - similar; *babhūva* - became; *asya* - its; *tat* - that; *rūpam* - form; *praticakṣaṇāya* - to reveal itself; *indraḥ* - the supreme being; *māyābhiḥ* - through *māyā* or false notions; *pururūpaḥ* - manifold; *īyate* - is perceived; *asya* - to it; *hi* - for; *daśa* - ten; *śatāḥ* - hundreds; *harayaḥ* - organs; *yuktāḥ* - (are) yoked *iti; ayam* - it; *vai* - verily; *harayaḥ* - (is) the organs; *ayam* - it (is); *vai* - verily; *daśa* - ten; *ca* - and; *sahasrāṇi* - thousands; *bahūni ca* - numerous; *anantāni* - countless; *ca* - and; *tat* - that; *etat* - this; *brahma* - *brahman; apūrvam* - (is) without antecedent (cause); *anaparam* - without consequent (effect); *anantaram* - without interior; *abāhyam* - without exterior; *ayam* - this; *sarva-anubhūh* - all-experiencing; *ātmā* - Self; *brahma* - (is) *brahman; iti* - this; *anuśāsanam* - (is) the instruction; (Rest as before.)

This is verily that meditation on mutual aids which Dadhyac, versed in the *Atharva Veda*, imparted to the two Aśvins. Observing this deed, the seer said, "It assumed the likeness of each form in order to reveal itself. On account of false notions the supreme being is perceived as manifold, for to it are yoked ten organs, nay hundreds of

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them." It indeed is the organs; it indeed is ten and thousands, numerous and countless. That *brahman* is without antecedent (cause) and without consequent (effect), without interior and without exterior. This Self, which experiences everything, is *brahman*. This is the instruction (of all Vedānta).

This mantra, which closes the fifth *brāhmaṇa* of the second chapter, contains another revelation that the ultimate conclusion of Vedānta comes from the *Atharva Veda*. Paul Deussen makes a candid statement that the three *Vedas*, *Ṛg*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*, in spite of being very poetic and positive in their outlook, do not show any trace of spiritual aspiration. They are concerned with the sensuous and mental happiness that can be achieved through many hedonistic pleasures. The contemplative outlook of the *Upaniṣads* came from the gentle life of the pre-Vedic people which is represented by the *Atharvan*. The anthropomorphic version of the Absolute which presents theistic modalities as if God has hands and legs and a human image, is repulsive to the monistic view of Vedānta. Hence, a sweeping correction is made in this mantra - it is the one without a second that is to be seen as the several effects seemingly becoming projected from a single cause. In this mantra all such pluralities as well as the dualities of antecedent and consequent, internal and external, are all denied to the Absolute. All the philosophical dross that has accrued through the explanations of phenomenal evolution now stands corrected.

The only lesson to be learned is that where one is impressed with the multiplicity of phenomena for one's own welfare, it is to understand oneself in relation to another as a counterpart for mutual aid. Hence, the analogy of honey is used. Many are the bees that go and collect honey from innumerable flowers. In each instance, the bee is aiding the flower and the flower is rewarding the bee with honey. What is gathered becomes one honey in the comb irrespective of the flowers from which it was brought. That honey then becomes nourishment for each person who enjoys it. Thus there is an implied unity both in the gathering and in the dispensing of honey. The rishi takes this occasion to put his signature in this verse as the author of *Madhu Vidyā*, even though it was retold through several voices. The final statement is also given here: "That *brahman* is without precedent or

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antecedent, without interior and without exterior. This Self, which experiences everything, is *brahman*." The doctrine is finalized with the term *anuśāsanam*, "the instruction."

Brāhmaṇa 6

Mantra 1

atha vaṁśaḥ. pautimāṣyo gaupavanāt, gaupavanaḥ pautimāṣyāt, pautimāṣyo gaupavanāt, gaupavanaḥ kauśikāt, kauśikaḥ kauṇḍinyāt, kauṇḍinyaḥ śāṇḍilyāt, śāṇḍilyaḥ kauśikācca gautamācca, gautamaḥ.

Word Meanings

atha - now; *vaṁśaḥ* - the line (of teachers); (Rest as in the translation.)

Now the line (of teachers): Pautimāṣya (received this knowledge) from Gaupavana, Gaupavana from (another) Pautimāṣya, (this) Pautimāṣya from (another) Gaupavana, (this) Gaupavana from Kauśika, Kauśika from Kauṇḍinya, Kauṇḍinya from Śāṇḍilya, Śāṇḍilya from Kauśika and Gautama, Gautama

Mantra 2

agniveśyāt, agniveśyaḥ śāṇḍilyāccānabhimlātācca, ānabhimlāta ānabhimlātāt ānabhimlāta ānabhimlātāt, ānabhimlāto gautamāt, gautamaḥ saitavaprācīnayogya abhyām, saitavaprācīnayogyau pārāśaryāt, pārāśaryo bhāradvājāt, bhāradvājo bhāradvājācca gautamācca, gautamo bhāradvājāt, bhāradvājaḥ pārāśaryāt, pārāśaryo baijavāpāyanāt, baijavāpāyanaḥ kauśikāyaneḥ, kauśikāyaniḥ.

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Word Meanings

(See the translation.)

from Āgniveśya, Āgniveśya from Śāṇḍilya and Ānabhimlāta, Ānabhimlāta from (another) Ānabhimlāta, (this) Ānabhimlāta from (a third) Ānabhimlāta, (this) Ānabhimlāta from Gautama, Gautama from Saitava and Prācīnayogya, Saitava and Prācīnayogya from Pārāśarya, Pārāśarya from Bhāradvāja, Bhāradvāja from (another) Bhāradvāja and Gautama, Gautama from (another) Bhāradvāja, (this) Bhāradvāja from (another) Pārāśarya, (this) Pārāśarya from Baijavāpāyana, Baijavāpāyana from Kauśikāyani, Kauśikāyani

Mantra 3

ghṛtakauśikāt, ghṛtakauśikaḥ pārāśaryāyaṇāt, pārāśaryāyaṇaḥ pārāśaryāt, pārāśaryo jātūkarṇyāt, jātūkarṇya āsurāyaṇācca yāskācca, āsurāyaṇastraivaṇeḥ, traivaṇiraupajandhaneḥ, aupajandhiraāsureḥ, āsuirbhāradvājāt, bhāradvāja ātreyāt, ātreyo māṇṭeḥ, māṇṭirgautamāt, gautamo gautamāt. gautamo vātsyāt, vātsyaḥ śāṇḍilyāt, śāṇḍilyaḥ kaiśoryātkāpyāt, kaiśoryaḥ kāpyaḥ kumārahāritāt, kumarahārito gālavāt, gālavo vidarbhīkauṇḍinyāt vidarbhīkauṇḍinyo vatsanapāto bābhravāt, vatsanapādbādbhravaḥ pathaḥ saubhrāt. panthāḥ saubharo'yāsyādāṅgirasāt, ayāsya āṅgirasa ābhūtestvāṣṭrāt, ābhūtistvāṣṭro viśvarūpāttvāṣṭrāt, viśvarūpastvāṣṭro'śvibhyām, aśvinau dadhīca ātharvaṇāt, dadhyaṅṅātharvaṇo'tharvaṇo daivāt, atharvā daivo mṛtyoḥ prādhvaṁsanāt, mṛtyuḥ prādhvaṁsanaḥ pradhvaṁsanāt, pradhvaṁsana ekarṣeḥ. ekarṣirvipracitteḥ. vipracittirvyaṣṭeḥ, vyaṣṭiḥ sanāroḥ, sanāruḥ sanātanāt, sanātanaḥ sanagāt, sanagaḥ parameṣṭhinaḥ. parameṣṭhī brahmaṇaḥ; brahma svayambhū, brahmaṇe namaḥ. iti ṣaṣṭam brāhmaṇam.

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Word Meanings

sanagaḥ - Sanaga; *parameṣṭhinaḥ* - from Parameṣṭhin *(virāj)*; *parameṣṭhī* - Parameṣṭhin *(virāj)*; *brahmaṇaḥ* - from Brahmā; *brahma* - (the supreme) *brahman*; *svayambhu* - self-born, eternal; *brahmaṇe* - to (the supreme) *brahman*; *namaḥ* - salutation; (Rest as in the translation.)

from Ghṛtakauśika, Ghṛtakauśika from Pārāśaryāyaṇa, Pārāśaryāyaṇa from Pārāśarya, Pārāśarya from Jātūkarṇya, Jātūkarṇya from Āsurāyaṇa and Yāska, Āsurāyaṇa from Traivaṇi, Traivaṇi from Aupajandhani, Aupajandhani from Āsuri, Āsuri from Bhāradvāja, Bhāradvāja from Ātreya, Ātreya from Māṇṭi, Māṇṭi from Gautama, Gautama from (another) Gautama, (this) Gautama from Vātsya, Vātsya from Śāṇḍilya, Śāṇḍilya from Kaiśorya Kāpya, Kaiśorya Kāpya from Kumārahārita, Kumārahārita from Gālava, Gālava from Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya, Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya from Vatsanapāt Bābhrava, Vatsanapāt Bābhrava from Pathin Saubhara, Pathin Saubhara from Ayāsya Āṅgirasa, Ayāsya Āṅgirasa from Ābhūti Tvāṣṭra, Ābhūti Tvāṣṭra from Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra, Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra from the two Aśvins, the Aśvins from Dadhyac Ātharvaṇa, Dadhyac Ātharvaṇa from Ātharvaṇa Daiva, Ātharvaṇa Daiva from Mṛtyu Prādhvaṁsana, Mṛtyu Prādhvaṁsana from Prādhvaṁsana, Prādhvaṁsana from Ekarṣi, Ekarṣi from Vipracitti, Vipracitti from Vyaṣṭi, Vyaṣṭi from Sanāru, Sanāru from Sanātana, Sanātana from Sanaga, Sanaga from Parameṣṭhin *(virāj)*, Parameṣṭhin from Brahmā *(hiraṇyagarbha)*. *Brahman* is self-born. Salutation to *brahman*.

Brahman is absolute knowledge through and through. The *Veda* (including the *Upaniṣads*) is but another form of *brahman* which is Self-existent. Therefore, it is said that the *Veda* has no human authors. The revelations of the *Veda* are non-personal but are revealed through individuals from time to time. Vedic

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knowledge is timeless, though its revelation is possible at any time. The line of teachers (*parampara*) of the honey doctrine (*madhuvidyā*) given in this *brāhmaṇa* is a eulogy to the knowledge of *brahman*. Ancient students of *brahmavidyā* repeated these three mantras in their daily adoration, believing that they had the efficacy of invoking the grace of the ancient teachers.

The three mantras conclude with a salutation to *brahman*, the Absolute. *Brahman* is neither human nor does *brahman* refer to a person. *Brahman* is qualified as self-born (*svayambhū*). It underlies and is the source of supreme cosmic consciousness (*cidākāśa*). In that sense, *brahman* is the ultimate ground for the manifestation of the first cause, the Creator, Brahmā. Brahmā is identified with *hiraṇyagarbha*, the prime source of the phenomenal world, to which the chain of cause and effect series is attributed. Brahmā is an allegoric ideogram poetically conceived. It is the cosmic incentive to project all names and forms and the meanings thereof. *Parameṣṭhin* is the functional dynamics of the entire ground of the manifested and the unmanifested. Thus, the names alluded to as being the beginning of the line of teachers - *brahman*, Brahmā and Parameṣṭhin - are the Vedic conception of uniting the origin of the phenomenon with the noumenon. *Brahman*, Brahmā and Parameṣṭhin are not to be counted as three separate entities. They all refer to the first cause, the causeless cause. They describe attributes of this primeval truth. Brahmā refers to the phenomenal expectation which was responsible for the elaboration of the noumenon of the pure spirit into names and forms and individuated bodies and minds within the frame of reference of the time/space continuum. After the beginning is conceived of, the whole postulation is raised to the status of *sanaga*. *Sanaga* is also not a person. It refers to the unity of the noumenon that has to spread itself out as the elaboration of the phenomenon. *Sanaga* has a central aspect which always remains unchanged (*nitya*) and it has an aspect that can be prolonged and expanded without its unity being destroyed. This dialectical unity of the eternal and the perennial within *sanaga* is represented by *sanātana*. *Sanātana* is a more expressive aspect of *sanāru*, the changeless reality which is multiplied into the unlimited nucleic source of all forms of life. *Sanāru* is that which always remains at one with the Absolute and yet is capable of functioning as the propelling life principle of a corporeal being (*kūṭasthā*). *Kūṭam* means as hard as a rock.

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Even at the stage of *sanāru*, no actual individual has emerged as a person with a body-mind construct. First there has to be the embryonic aspect of cosmic diversification. The model for individuation as a principle is *vyaṣṭi*, which is both the individuation of the psycho-physical body and the personification of the spirit into the persona. At this stage, the spirit starts functioning in its expansion into an embodied being. Differentiation of individuals can come into existence only when the individuated being or persona assumes mental colorations *(varṇa)*. Through this mental coloration the typical nature of one individual is distinguished from another. This aspect is called *vipracitti*. This leads to the four-fold archetypal classifications of individuated consciousness, popularly known later as *cāturvarṇya*.

Even after the fertilization of an ovum, it takes considerable time for the psychic and physical mold of a living entity to manifest as a seedling in a seed, a fledgling in an egg, or a child in the womb of its mother. At that time, two more dynamics have to be in the growing embryo or fetus. These are the will to be *(elan-vital)* and also the limiting factor of embodied life by which disintegration sets in. These two principles are called *ekaṛṣi*, the one which has to plod through all favorable and unfavorable situations to arrive at the final termination of life. The terminating principle is *prādhvaṁsana*. The actual termination in a physical body is brought about by *mṛtyu prādhvaṁsana*. The actualization of death is assigned to a demi-urge called Mṛtyu or Yama. In the Indian pantheon of Gods, Śiva is identified with Maheśvara - the dissolver of the manifested. Hence *mṛtyu prādhvaṁsana* is personified as a deity called Ātharvaṇa Daiva. The word *daiva* indicates that the status of Śiva as Ātharvaṇa is of a deity. And it is from this deity a semi-man, semi-deity, Dadhyac Ātharvaṇa is postulated.

At this stage we have to go into a legendary story, a poetic allegory. The sun-deity Vivasvān had two wives, Saṁjñā and Chāyā. The sun illuminates all physical bodies with its light showing the figure against the shadow which falls on the unilluminated side. The illuminating light which differentiates one thing from another is called *saṁjñā*. It is the noumenon from which nomenclature or names come. No object can be identified if the bright side is not complemented by a shadow, *chāyā*. Thus, *saṁjñā* and *chāyā* are not people. They are a subtle way of explaining the visibility of objects in light. The story goes that the

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sun's light was too bright for his consort Saṁjñā, so she wanted to take leave of her husband and go for a holiday. She changed into a wild mare and went to the forest seeking the wisdom of Self-knowledge (*brahmavidyā*). Prior to her leaving Vivasvān, she had three children with him. They were Manu, Yama and Yamī. Yama, mentioned above as Mṛtyu, reported her leaving to Vivasvān. The sun took pity on her. He changed himself into a male horse and lived with Saṁjñā who was still a mare for some time. Vivasvān taught her *brahmavidyā* while he was a horse. Twin children were born to Saṁjñā. They had the prowess of horses so they were called Aśvini Kumāras.

Thus, according to the legend, the Aśvini Kumāras are not of human origin, but spiritual conception. But physically they are said to be born of the seed of Dadhyac, better known in the spiritual history of India as Dadhīci. We can see a parallel to this in the story of the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ. According to the long patriarchal heritage given in St. Matthew's Gospel, the lineage from Abraham to David, David to Solomon and Solomon to Jacob terminates with Joseph. But St. Matthew explicitly makes it clear that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, making the lineage in the gospel superfluous if not absurd. However, St. Paul maintains that while Christ was the son of God, Jesus came from the seed of Joseph. This is given in the *Apocrypha*, but has been removed from current versions of the Bible.

The lineage of teachers continues from Dadhyac Ātharvaṇa who, like Jesus Christ, has in him the spirit of the noumenon and also the genetic continuance of the human race. The Aśvins, as the twin sons of Vivasvān, have in them the supernatural powers of deities, particularly because they have partaken of the elixir of immortality *(amṛta)*. As the sons of Dadhyac, they have the dispositions of human beings. From them came the demiurge Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra and from Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra came Ābhūti Tvāṣṭra. In spite of the differences between individuals and between ethnic communities, in every individual there are common biological features, both physical and spiritual, which keep all human beings within the group *homo-sapiens*. This common sharing indicates that everybody is part of the *viśvarūpa*, universal form. This is particularly made explicit by the parentage of Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra. The term *tvāṣṭra* refers to an artificer such as a carpenter who fashions many pieces of furniture out of the same wood. Viśvarūpa Tvāṣṭra's father was Viśvakarma, the ar-

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chitect of the universe. He built many cities and temples to house humans as well as gods. We all have the creative urge and talent of Viśvakarma in us. With the instinct of creativity comes the incentive to seek perfection. This disposition comes from Ābhūti Tvāṣṭra. *Ābhūti* means one endowed with many abilities and also one who can tirelessly pursue one's assignments.

The indomitable courage and enthusiasm which we have up to the last moment of life is given to us by our vital energy. According to the story in the first chapter, the luminous faculties in us *(devas)* discovered their saviour hiding in the mouth. On seeing the *prāṇa*, the *devas* shouted in excitement, "Here he is in the mouth," which in Sanskrit is *ayam āsye antariti*. As the vital energy maintains the essence of all the limbs *(angas)* of the entire organism, it is also called *aṅgirasa*. It is said here that Ayāsya Aṅgirasa comes from Ābhūti Tvāṣṭra and Pathin Saubhara comes from Ayāsya Aṅgirasa.

According to legend, Saubhari was a seer who became sexually disturbed in his old age. He transformed himself into an exquisitely handsome young man and asked for the hand of the daughter of King Māndhātā. The king said he would give him any of his fifty daughters who would agree to be his wife. Surprisingly, all fifty daughters chose to be his wives and give him conjugal pleasure. After having consumed their love, the seer became convinced of the meaninglessness of sensual pleasures, so he renounced all pleasures and did penance for Self-realization. All the females who loved him also became renunciates. Thus Saubhari's name indicates the two aspects of Eros spoken of by Plato, worldly Eros and divine Eros. It also indicates that the essence of libidal energy *(rattrasa)* which is most central in human life is the source of conjugal pleasure as well as transcendental imperience. *Brahmacarya* is being praised by the *Upaniṣad* as an imperative discipline for gaining realization.

It is interesting that Pathin Saubhara is considered as a source of Vatsanapāt Bābhrava. Vatsanapāt is the same as Vatsanābha. When a baby is in the mother's womb the child and mother are physically one. Vital energy and essential fluids of nourishment go from the mother to the child through the umbilical cord. The word *bābhrava* is indicative of the maternal protection coming from the mother's umbilical cord. The womb of the mother is like a fortress where the embryo grows without being disturbed by any external danger. One aspect of the Supreme

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Mother is Goddess Durga, the protectress of the weak *(durgam* means a fort).

The Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya who comes from Vatsanapāt Bābhrava alludes to the path of *kuṇḍi*, adopted by those who have rejected Vedic rituals. The sacred grass *darbha* is considered to be the very basis of Vedic culture. It is important here to take note that *vidarbhi* is one who has given up Vedic ritualism in which the *kuśa* or *darbha* is used for one's seat *(āsana)*. There is a very intriguing verse in the *Bhagavad Gīta* (VI:11) which refers to the three strata of the revealed Vedic culture of India: "Having established firmly in a clean place a seat for himself, one neither too high nor too low and covered respectively with cloth, skin and grass (one should sit in meditation)." This verse mentions the *chaila* (a piece of cloth like a prayer-mat), on the top of which is put a *jina*, the skin of a deer or an antelope, and above it, a *kuśa* leaf *(darbha)*. Jainas use cloth for their meditation or prayer mat. The antelope is a symbol of the *prajāpati* of the *dakṣa yaga* which was pierced by Śiva with his arrow. The *kuśa* is the sacred grass which the Vedic brahmin used for his fire ritual. According to Jaina history, the first *Tīrthankara*, Ṛṣabha Deva, was anterior to Śiva. Śiva himself is praised as Rudra and equated with the roaring bull, Ṛṣabha. Mahāvīra, the twenty-fourth *Tīrthankara*, was a contemporary of Lord Buddha. When we count twenty-three generations before him, that period goes beyond the Hārappa culture. So we can safely presume that the *chaila* culture of the Jainas was followed by the *jina* (skin) culture of the Śaivites which was followed by the *kuśa* culture.

As we study the spiritual oscillation of the Vedic era from Rudra to Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu to Śiva and back to Viṣṇu we see there was a keen contest between Śiva worshippers and Viṣṇu worshippers. Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya directly refers to the critical period when Rudra was restored to power. This we can make out by studying the story of Kauṇḍinya who was born in the *Śaiva* heritage but who ran away from his allegiance to Śiva to take refuge in Viṣṇu and become Viṣṇugupta. Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya is a counterpart of Viṣṇugupta who avenged Viṣṇugupta by becoming Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya. This Vidarbhīkauṇḍinya comes from Gālava. Historically Gālava is a disciple of Viśvāmitra.

According to the *Rāmāyana*, especially *Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyana*, when Viśvāmitra asked for the help of Rāma, Rāma was in a state of depression. Depression caused by ignorance is usually

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compared to cataracts and the remedy for cataracts is collyrium. Gālava is a physician who cures psychological myopia and spiritual cataracts with the collyrium of wisdom. It is a custom in India to praise any guru as a physician who cures blindness with the collyrium of wisdom. Gālava can also be taken as a historical person. Viśvāmitra, his guru, was almost pushed to the extreme of being a martyr in fighting against the brahminical prejudice that a *kṣatriya* could never be a *brahmacārī*. Ultimately, Viśvāmitra won. Thus Gālava can be considered as a symbol of breaking the idols of prejudice.

From Kumārahārita on, we come to historically known gurus. He was a *smṛtikāra*, a disciple of Kānva. Kāpya is a general name applied to most gurus who are always moving around showering grace like rain clouds. In the *Vivekacūdāmaṇi* of Śankara he gives his adoration to *parivrājakas*, wisdom teachers who go from place to place to give the benefit of their wisdom. The next guru, Śāṇḍilya, is on par with Nārada, a divine seer *(devarṣi)*. The *Śāṇḍilya Sūtra* is even now revered as a classical text on the science of devotion. Gautama, Ātreya, Bhāradvāja, Pārāśarya and Kauśika are all patriarchal chiefs of various schools of thought whose names appear repeatedly. Among the names of gurus given here we also find exponents of various sciences like *Āyurveda* which was retold by Ātreya. Jātukarṇya was an exponent of grammar. Vyāsa, named here as *Pārāśarya*, was well known as a classifier of the *Veda* and the composer of the *Mahābhārata* epic. He also wrote the aphorisms of Vedānta. *Prācīnayogya* is a model of ethical perfection for becoming a yogi. *Āgniveśya* is the disciple of *Ātreya* who contributed to the completion of *Caraka Samhitā*.

Although it is time consuming, it is worthwhile to study the significance of all the names mentioned in this line of teachers. This long list of the hierarchy of gurus is also given to show that wisdom flows through generations of people like a great river of *brahmavidyā* which enriches the soul of a country. Just like those who want to take advantage of a great source of life like the Ganges, Nile or Mississippi go near to the river, those who want to be benefited by the river of wisdom should go like pilgrims to the presence of a living guru and receive from him or her the wisdom which has been nourishing seekers from time immemorial and will ever go on through the bipolarity of gurus and disciples.

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AUM namo brahmādibhyo
brahmavidyāsampradāyakartṛbhyo
vaṁśaṛṣibhyo namo gurubhyaḥ

We pay our obeisance to all gurus who are seers of *brahmavidyā* and who have been disseminating the wisdom of the Absolute. We give our reverence to the lineage of all gurus.

AUM

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APPENDIX I

The *Madhu Brāhmaṇa (Brāhmaṇa* 5) forms a sequel to the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* (*Brāhmaṇa* 4). Certain secrets of Vedānta wisdom are implied in the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*. Sureśvarācārya gives a commentary on it which he calls the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Bhāṣya Vārtika*. The *Madhukāṇḍa* constitutes the essence of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The *Kanva* recension of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* consists of seventeen books *(kāṇḍas)*. The first two chapters of the seventeenth book are called the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, and the following six chapters thereof are called the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The first two chapters of the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* are called *Madhukāṇḍa*. Sureśvara begins the last section of the *Madhukāṇḍa* with an invocation *(maṅgala śloka)*. The traditional Sanskrit convention is to begin a new work with an invocation at the beginning. According to Patāñjali, the author of the *Mahābhāṣya*, the invocation can be at the beginning, the middle, or the end. In this case, Sureśvara gives the invocation at the conclusion of the honey section.

The salutation is addressed to Viṣṇu. Although Viṣṇu is the name of one of the gods of the Indian pantheon, that is not important here. Symbolically Viṣṇu combines the knower, the knowing, and the object of knowing. Knowing is a state of illumination. Knowledge is the objectification of all the special features that are implied in knowledge. If the whole of the Absolute is known in its entirety, no part of it is left un-illuminated. That means there is nothing hidden. An obscuration caused by not knowing is ignorance. The reference to Viṣṇu is to show that origin, existence, and dissolution are part and parcel of the totality of knowledge, and at the same time, there can be partial and delimited items of knowledge caused by the individuation or phenomenality of embodied beings. In the term *viṣṇu*, *viṣ* suggests the act of pervading. Viṣṇu being total knowledge, there is nothing that is not pervaded by omniscience. Thus it is to be understood in contrast with all specific or individual manifestations.

Such a contingency arises in Vedānta which speaks of

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knowledge and ignorance. Ignorance is also called nescience. The ignorance in Vedānta is to be considered in a very special sense. Suppose a torch is flashed in the dark. The light falls in a limited field. What is illuminated can then appear to the eye. The experiencing of visual perception occurs in a given area. In a relative sense, that is knowledge. It can even be valid knowledge *(yathārtha jñāna)* i.e., a flower is seen as a flower, a person is seen as a person, and a stone is seen as a stone. Actually, there are two things happening. One is sense perception. The other is an intellectual supplement being added to the percept through a conceptual interpretation which is culled from previously stored memories. Thus there arises a confection of the percept and the concept. Vedānta sees two defects in this process. The first is that a superimposed phenomenal gestaltation is taken for the actual comprehension of an object-in-itself. The Vedāntins call that a superimposed figure which is only circumstantially contingent. There is an implied reference to the real that provides for both the object-matter and subject-matter of perception. However, it is conditional (*sopādhika*). The second and major defect seen by Vedantins is the great obscuration into which the Self goes. There is only one Self, and that Self is the same for all. However, when a small patch of an illuminated object is counterpoised by the partial subjectivity of the Self, the place of the Self is immediately claimed by a personal ego (*aham*). That is automatically circumlimited by the consciousness that is occupying time and space and by certain biological occurrences. The omnipresent Self thus becomes extremely limited. Due to the very fact that one sees a superficial picture, much of the reality connected with it is immediately concealed from the subject. The act of perception makes the subject a corporeal part of the inestimably vast reality of the Absolute. The two defects which result are the conviction that the subject is experiencing truth and the subject alienating the Self from its totality. In the smallness of that experience, the beginningless and the endless become an event with a beginning in time and an end in time. The changeless seems to have an origin in time and space, mass and, after a while, disappearance into nothingness. The occurrence of the phenomenal in the noumenal is what the Vedāntin calls ignorance. What is referred to here is not the common interpretation of ignorance as not knowing something.

Ignorance is sometimes looked upon as mistaken identity.

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That may be somewhat relevant here, but it is relevant only in the sense that the partial is misunderstood as the total. The partial is *yathārtha*, and the total is *paramārtha*. *Yathārtha*, or empirically valid knowledge, can be contrasted with hallucinative appearance where knowledge is unreal and no empirical validity is present. Such falsified knowledge is *pratibhāsa*. The Vedāntin underlines the total and the ultimate nature of *paramārtha*, and brackets the transactional or empirically valid with the assumed. For the phenomenologically confused, Sureśvara quotes from the *Bhagavad Gīta* which identifies *jñānam*, *jñeyam*, and *parijñātā* as the triple incentives that stimulate the subject to assume the agency of action *(karmacodanā)*. In the same manner, he also refers to the triple aspects, instrumental action (*karaṇam*), action (*karma*), and the agent of action (*karta*). When the personal illumination of consciousness comes as an individuated aspect, a three-fold division comes in the mental sphere, and three psychophysical shades of function occur in the body-mind complex. Sureśvara calls this *avidyā*. Further, he says there are two types of nescience or *avidyā*. *Mūlāvidyā* or *māyā* is the obscuration of the knowing faculty by which it becomes confined to a part and conceals the Absolute. *Tūlāvidyā* is the effect in the subjective consciousness. Normally it is just called *avidyā*.

What is prescribed by the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* for getting over nescience is a total eradication of all previously conditioned preferences. Unfortunately, because of the very many stories given in the legends and mythologies of the world, emancipation *(mokṣa)*, has come to be accepted by the public as some fantastic, magical experience. However, its meaning is very simple: to be free of all erroneous knowledge. We have many conditioned reflexes and colorations in our reception of objective and subjective stimuli. With partial knowledge or wrong knowledge, several million prejudices are maintained in the individual's mind. Colored visions are to be de-colored. Conditionings are to be de-conditioned. Prejudices are to be dropped. It is in this sense that Sureśvara looks upon renunciation as imperative to attain freedom from prejudices and colorations.

It is traditionally accepted by the wise men of India that out of all means to emancipation, the best is the attitude of renunciation. The word "renunciation" has created a lot of confusion, not only in the minds of Indian people, but also in the minds of several traditionalists in other countries. Renunciation can be easily

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associated with taboos. The worst taboos come to manifest by the envisioning of spiritual and cultural values with regard to the enjoyment of pleasures and actions that are related with the finding of the means for pleasure. This has especially grown around attitudes towards sex and sexual gratification. The prime motive in a living organism is monitored by its propensity to gravitate towards pleasure. This has become a main trial because the basic value foundation of the Self is happiness. Happiness has an intimate relationship with pure duration. Duration is measured by time. That which has a beginning and an end is temporal. For that reason, all events are temporal. What is involved in an event is the presentation of an existential factor. What is characteristic of existence is its irrefutability. Any encounter with an existential factor will impress the subject with the revelation of its existential being as awareness. It is this awareness that becomes impressed by the temporality of an event or its quality of pure duration. When the idea of time or the sequential aspect of eventualities comes, there is an inner compulsion not to let go of what is valued as a pleasure element. At the same time, the psychodynamics of life are such that the organism is helplessly floating in a stream of consciousness which is also identified with time. The inevitable pressure that one feels to move away from where one is to where one is not intensifies the feeling of wanting to hold onto the pleasurable. It is this hedonistic obsession that makes time a crucial factor. When there is no such specialization and the flow of consciousness is effortless, it obtains the quality of transcendence, of pure duration. Liberation or emancipation brings along with it an existential transcendence by taking away the hook of the ego from all preferences. This comes naturally, just as a ripe fruit falls away from the tree by itself, or a dry leaf flutters away from its branch. Renunciation is not actually a throwing away or a mechanical giving up. At the same time, renunciation will not happen without the cultivation of an intimate discrimination of values. It is easy to give up a thing of lesser value so that one may hold on to a higher value. In Vedānta, the highest value is the value of the Self.

Renunciation involves both knowledge and a behavioral attitude. Knowledge concerns: 1) knowing the falsity of existential appearance; 2) making a value appraisal which shows the prior conviction of a value associated with an existential appearance to be misguided; and 3) having an awareness of consequences that

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follow as compulsive obligatory factors which is strong enough to diffuse the incentive to hold on to a valueless appearance. Similarly, in behavioral patterns, one has to decide where the action propensity really belongs. It can be complying with a natural law which cannot be changed by the individual organism. In that case, it is not the action that is renounced, but the longing for the result ensuing from it. This is called *karmaphalatyāga*. There can be an acceptance of the agency of action on an altruistic basis in which a person becomes instrumental in carrying out a commissioned aspect of action which is for the general good, for the good of all. Here the renunciation is of the attachment of the ego to its pride of agency. One places oneself in the collective consciousness of action rather than remaining in one's individuated consciousness. The third aspect is the non-performance of action. Sureśvara warns us to look into all these aspects of *tyāga*, or renunciation. It is in the light of this that we should understand the distinction between the desirable and the desired.

In all walks of life, an action comes as a result of a prompting. The prompting is called *codanā* which is related to the word *pracodanā* which means "incentive," or "inspirational." Every action in which our motor system is implied comes from a command *(ājña)* given by the discriminative power of the ego. Hearing, the most primary faculty of perception, should be turned to the directive that comes from the wisdom teaching of one who is already emancipated. The science of emancipation is given in the *Upaniṣads* and hence it is called *śruti*. *Śruti* is listening to *a priori* wisdom teaching. An aspirant is expected to be attentive to the word of instruction. The word of instruction places before the aspirant a revelation of the highest quality and gives him or her an incentive to consider it as his or her path along which to strive further. Sureśvara adds two circumstantial aids. One is the time-honored validity of the revelation that is at hand which is testified to by the teacher who gives the incentive. The second is a reminder that this time-honored experience has been treasured as a recorded teaching through millennia. These together have a joint impact on the listener. It is with this as a background that we accept the statement, "the *ātman* is to be heard." This is further elucidated, "the *ātman* is to be thought of with the help of subtle reasons."

Śravaṇa is the act of hearing. Even through we may hear

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only one word, the faculty that is poised in that direction is the organ of hearing. All the other senses are also alerted to receive subtle forms of energy that are likely to ensue from the meaning of what is heard. The whole body is exposed to the atmosphere, and there is a covert anticipation of a release from bondage as a soothing sensation is felt. The eye automatically becomes concentrated at the center core of one's psyche as if it is already anticipating the envisioning of a liberated state. Automatically or unknowingly, *śravaṇa* leads the mind into a deep search, called *manana*. Only after familiarizing us with *śravaṇa* and *manana*, does the *Upaniṣad* take us further to the most important processing of truth which happens in *nididhyāsana*. Then we are in the grip of contemplative discipline. It is only thereafter that the rishi puts his finger on the deciphering of the highest aspect of imperiential appreciation of the nature of the Self.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* holds the view that the Self alone is. It is held to be without beginning, without end and without any inner division. It has no name and no form. It also has no agency of action. It is said to be knowledge (*cit*), through and through. Every time a person thinks of knowledge, that person sees an origin of that knowledge, an expression of it, and a cessation of it. It has a spatial and temporal existence which includes in it perceptual details and conceptual interpretations. Hence it is experienced. When certain objective details are subjectively appreciated, their existence is substantiated by awareness (*stithi*). In the stream of consciousness, nothing is allowed to be static, even though the repetitive modulation of an experience may have a extended time span of being presented in consciousness. If a pot is seen continuously for a long time, that is a repetitive recurrence of the first existential impression which eventually will recede. Every opening phase of an experiential quanta of sensation or interpretation is closed by an automatic cessation (*ttrodhana*).

So we have two references to the Self. One is to the Self as the beginningless and changeless substrata of knowledge in all which is like a canvas in pure light, the medium on which varying impressions of the world picture are made. The other is the temporal and spatial superimposition in which perceptual light, which may as well be sound, touch, taste, or smell, can be a specific carrier of modulations which change the canvas with impressions of light and darkness. That quality of the stimulating

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energy serves as the inevitable condition for causing a modulation. For example, light is juxtaposed to stand in various relations with shade or darkness so that the sight of light itself is substituted with the perception of figures in which the shadow or darkness is as important as the illuminating light. On one side, it conceals the relevant basis of the Self, and on the other, it adds concocted images to it. The factor of stimulation here is called *bhaṇa*. It has on one side a delimited existential ground (*bhānāśraya*), the ground of projection, and on the other, the dynamics of transforming a few ideas into the idea of an image, *noesis*. That is the basis of all superimpositions *bhaśyām)*. Thus we have pure consciousness (*cit)* for the basis, and the converted image of consciousness (*cidābhāsa)* for our experiential data. Here the knowledge about the conditional projection is specific, and the self involved in it is therefore called *vijñānātmā*. In the *viśvātmā*, the homogeneity of individual consciousness and the unity of the collective consciousness is pure awareness. In the *vijñānātmā*, the mind which functions between the gross (*sthūla*) and the subtle (*sūskṣma*) is looked upon as an oscillating factor which accounts for the distinctive details of all items of informative knowledge stemming from the gross basis of the elements that go into the physical self. Instead of taking the gross elements as such, Narayana Guru substitutes an image of the gross which he calls *sthūlasaṅkalpanam*.

Here in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, to call our attention to the variation in the individuated occurrences of specific interpretive consciousness, several examples are shown. The first example given is of three musical devices: a drum, a conch and a *vīṇā*. These instruments stimulate the faculty of hearing. Most objects in this world are visible to our eyes, and yet our eyes do not have an interpretative ability to infer the intrinsic characteristics of the world solely on the basis of visual perception. This is clear in the example of the three instruments mentioned. Unless a person beats a drum, he will never know that it has the quality to produce a percussive effect. The second example is that of the conch shell. It is not by beating it that we understand the tonality of it; that comes only by blowing through it. There is a vast difference between a percussion instrument and a wind instrument. But both can be harmonized in music. The *vīṇā* is a string instrument. Its vibratory function comes from the tension of the strings and not by the manipulation of the *prāṇa*, or wind, direct-

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ed by a person into, for example, the conch shell. These three instruments are not limited in their varieties of musical expression and harmonics or symphony and it is only by playing these instruments that we get into the inner details of their sound-producing capabilities. However transient are these phenomena, the *Upaniṣad* wants to note their inseparable belongingness to the pure Self. That is why Sureśvara retains the status of the individuated self, (*Jīvātmā*) as a sequel to the universal Self (*paramātmā*). Certain philosophers like Narayana Guru do not explicitly retain such a classification. However, we should know that interpretive science formulates its own phrases and terms to bring clarity to explanations. Music is a part of our life which is considered to be both inspirational and agitating. Inspirational music has already been extolled in the *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa*. These examples emphasize the purity of music. It does not matter from which medium it comes.

The second example given of the burning of damp firewood which causes smoke, sparks or dust of different colors, shapes and clarity, has a direct reference to the quality of the mantra's instructions and songs of exaltation given in the *Ṛg, Sāma, Yajur,* and *Atharva,* which are taken seriously for revaluation by the *Upaniṣad*. The *Upaniṣad* does not condone all the praises that are sung to personalized deities or hedonistic petitions made to the gods. We can see a derogative tone in the comparison of the four *Vedas* and their expressions to the smoke, sparks, dust and light emitted from burnt sacrifices in which the firewood is damp. From this it is evident that the *Upaniṣad* recommends only knowledge that leads us to clarity and certitude.

The last example given is of the rivers flowing into the ocean. In the *Upaniṣad,* we see that analytical considerations are complemented with synthetic considerations. If we read the Upaniṣadic text and try to find its secrets by reading only the commentary of Śankara, we note that he had to skip many details of the very exercises he himself did to arrive at certain pithy conclusions. It is here that we find Sureśvara, Ānandagiri, and Bhartṛprapañca giving us useful directions. In fact, later Vedāntins, grammarians, logicians, and philologists belonging to the Hindu and Buddhist schools closely examined the technical details of the consciousness that deals with specificity on one hand and generality on the other. As we go into a more comprehensive study of the terms honey and *puruṣa,* we will have more

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occasions to go to greater depths.

In the mantras that follow, we have four terms to examine: the cosmic person (*virāṭ puruṣa*), the generic person who is identified with the immanence of *hiraṇyagarbha*, the individuated person who is the same as *jīvātmā*, and the unique individual (*vyakti*). The *hiraṇyagarbha* is considered an emanation of the *puruṣa* in the *Vedas*. The first chapter of this Upaniṣad gave a detailed description of the *hiraṇyagarbha*. But the relationship of *hiraṇyagarbha* with *virāṭ puruṣa* was not even hinted at. *Virāṭ puruṣa* and *hiraṇyagarbha* are linked only in Śankara's *Bhāṣya* on the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*. In further elucidations given by Sureśvara and other followers of Śankara, the concept of *hiraṇyagarbha* was elaborated. Sometimes they maintain the unity of a cosmic person and sometimes they referred to fragmented immanence. Each of these terms is to be examined separately so that we will have a clear notion of the placement of their connotations in the varying contexts of the *Madhu Brāhmaṇa*.

Etymologically the Sanskrit word *puruṣa* has a very close association with the word "person." The *persona* in the individual is a functional dynamic. For its energy dispersal and disposal it has systems that are developed to serve its meaning and a matrix of physiologic designs devised through a network of bio-chemical and neuro-psychological organisms. Like a throb which enlarges itself from an epicenter and rhythmically and symmetrically makes a counter movement, a person has several micro-epicenters within which all are regulated by a unitive epicenter. This microsystem can be as minute as an atom or the smallest conceivable cell. It belongs to the symmetrical macro-universe in which every cosmic body can be compared to a pulsation. However different are the magnitudes of these systems, the functional throb is the same. In the *Veda*, this universally functioning person is called *virāṭ puruṣa*. In the biologic world of infinitesimal function, it is the urge of a sperm to drive itself into an ovum. When millions of sperm cells are running the race to reach an ovum, qualitatively every sperm has the same functional program. Their dispatch from the testes of a man is more or less simultaneous. There is homogeneity both in the content and function of the sperm cells in spite of their multitudinousness. On the basis of this homogeneity it is called *puruṣa*, meaning "that which is the same quantitatively and qualitatively." In the nebula

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which is destined to be this or that star or a galaxy of stars, the same homogeneity is in the primordial smoky substance. That is why the material substance and the collective meaning of the universal phenomena are also called the cosmic person. This does not mean that the cosmic person makes the nucleic person. What we have to learn from the comparison of the micro-person and the macro-person is that there is a universal manifestation of a law of similar order.

If a law has to function in the elaboration of a potential into its expression, there has to be a guided movement of energy which can again and again bring the identical result. In a clock, the needles go round and round making the clock strike six in the morning and six in the evening, twelve at mid-noon and twelve at midnight. In observing it, we will surely understand that there is a regularized system meticulously functioning in it. Leibnitz called it the "pre-established harmony gifted by the organizational causation." To make it appeal to people's imaginations, he spoke of the *monad*, and the *monad of monads*. Spinoza spoke of the nature that is naturing, and the nature that is natured (*natura naturans* and *natura naturata*). Poetically we can say that in the device of the *puruṣa*, there is a recurring of an undeniable law. Indian rishis call it *dharma*. *Dharma* is not to be understood as a single entity with a single throb of function. One cause elaborates into many effects in which each effect takes the role of being the next cause to elaborate itself further. It is otherwise said to be duplicating and replicating and enormously proliferating through multiple recycling. In Sanskrit, it is called *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is defined as *prakarṣeṇa-karotīti-prakṛti* which means "spontaneously and generously causing the action of multiplication." The original program is concealed in the *tabula rasa* of the stuff of manifestation which becomes a fantastic world of creation. It is here *dharma* gains the support of action propensity (*karma*) and becomes *kāma*. *Kāma* has in it a dynamic such as in a loaded pistol which can be emptied only by firing. *Dharma* elaborates itself into *kāma*, *kāma* into *karma* and *karma* into *prakṛti's* creative extravagance. *Prakṛti* eventually extinguishes itself through a total depletion of the accumulated energy.

You cannot tear a part of such a concept off and conveniently examine it as a smear under a microscope. There is an inseparable relationship between the primordial cause called *māyā* and its effect. *Māyā* is a negative shadow-like concealer of the Absolute

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which itself is born, so to speak, of a secret stir in the totality of being. On the implicit side this makes the Absolute (*brahman*) a causal figure like the cosmic person (*virāṭ*). On the explicit side, it becomes the grand magic of manifestation seen in the colossal ignorance glorified as *māyā*. This is how the *puruṣa* is brought to resemble the honey (*madhu*) which comes from many flowers. No flower is a ready-made storehouse of honey. Each flower has to manifest separately and each drop of honey must be gathered by a separate bee to be stored up in the honey comb. There it gains the general characteristic of honey even though every bit of it is specifically gathered from specific flowers by specific bees. The reader will not fully grasp the purport of what is conveyed in these passages with a single reading. The specific nature of a manifested sentient being and the universal character of the collective sentiency cannot easily be connected to the universal Self.

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APPENDIX II

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I.4.7), we read, "The presentation of objects came to be experienced by 'this'." 'This', as 'the other', came to be personalized, and it became customary to address 'this' as 'you','and refer to 'the other' as 'he', 'she' and 'it'. To identify 'the other', individuals were given names (*nāma*). The namesake became familiarized by associating the form (*rūpa*) of an individual with his or her name. This world consists of innumerable bodies with divergent names and forms. When one individual is to be differentiated, we give the name of the individual and a description of the form. In all this, the knowledge which is concretely expressed also remains unseen as an immanent substance of reality all the way to the toes and fingertips. When a sword is in its sheath, the sword is not seen; only the sheath is seen. Fire is hiding in a tree from its roots to the leaves at the tips of its branches. Even so, the Self of a person is immanent in an individual, but we distinctly see only the breath that he breathes, the words that he speaks, and a number of behavioral actions when he behaves. When we breathe, we know the vital breath, and not the Self. When we see, we experience our eyes, and not the Self. When we hear, we experience our hearing faculty, and not the Self. When we think, we experience only our mind. These names are all assigned to the functions of the various faculties. As we are always engaged with one sensory or mental activity at a time, we have only a fragmentary knowledge about our sentience. A unitive or unified knowledge does not easily come to us because of our piecemeal knowledge. The one and indivisible knowledge of the Self remains transcendent from specific manifestations. So the Self can be seen, known, and experienced only by meditating on the totality of the Self, called *brahman*. In *Adhyāya II* where Yājñavalkya conveys the supreme reality that is to be known to Maitreyī, he reiterates this teaching to direct her into the study of the Absolute. The original mantra says: *ātmeteyeva upāsīta* - "The *ātman* itself should be meditated

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on." In the *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa*, the subject is reintroduced.

In the first *brāhmaṇa*, Gārgya presented to Ajātaśatru the problem of realizing the Self. Gārgya, who was known as Bālāki, was only a scholar and not a realized person. He made the claim of teaching *brahmavidyā* to Ajātaśatru. Bālāki's exposition was inadequate. Ajātaśatru proved this by presenting the Self veiled by the unconscious of a person who was in deep sleep. At that time, Ajātaśatru made the promise that the realization of the Self would be revealed to Gārgya. That promise once again comes into perspective when Yājñavalkya tells his young wife that the ultimate goal of life is the realization of the Self. As a preliminary to enter into the subject, a dialogue between Maitreyī and Yājñavalkya is presented. This dialogue has two aspects. One is the *a priori* familiarization with the nature of the Self presented as the essence of love *(priyam)*. The other is a deeper analysis and pondering over the subject. Elaboration of all the implications of the Self will be given in the third *adhyāya*. Some important epistemological questions and the methodology of investigation are implied in the dialogue between Maitreyī and Yājñavalkya. The subject was also incorporated in the aphorisms of Bādarāyaṇa which are known as the *Vedānta Sūtras*. According to Dasgupta, more attention should be given to the presentation of the Self in relation to *brahman* by Gaudapāda in his *Māṇḍūkya Kārika*. Śankara is only the disciple of Gaudapāda's disciple, Govinda. Therefore, all credit for the serious presentation of *brahmavidyā* after the Upaniṣadic period goes to Gaudapāda. Of course, it is Śankara who made this subject the mainstay of Vedānta. After Śankara, these studies were pursued with vigor on the one hand by Sureśvara, and on the other by Padmapādācārya. Sureśvara's and Padmapāda's studies are to be contrasted with the study of Vācaspatimiśra to whom is attributed the *Bhāmati*. Padmapāda's work is called *Pañcapādika*. It is also known as *Vivaraṇaprasthāna*. Thereafter, this subject was further elaborated by Ānanda Giri. We cannot omit mentioning these authors who have given their best efforts to the study and analysis of this *Upaniṣad*.

The Absolute, *brahman*, is described with two variant norms or marks which, in Sanskrit, are called the *lakṣaṇa*. There are two approaches to mark the differentiating character of anything that is to be defined. One is a negative approach which is commonly used because we are familiar with several relativistic as-

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pects, in which we arrive at a notion of the Absolute by presuming or conjecturing counterparts to absolutist notions. For example, we know a period of time which has a beginning and also an end. We treat it as relative time. We contrast it with the image of a time mentally conceived as beginningless and endless. Actually, our minds are incapable of going beyond beginning and end except through imagination. Everything in this world is temporally, spatially, and qualitatively related to everything else, and therefore we know what is relative. In contrast to the relative, we coin a word, "Absolute." On hearing the word, "Absolute," we know it is not relative. All the same, we do not know what the Absolute is. From this situation, there arises a need to find a satisfactory concept of the Absolute substantiated with experience. An individual is only a partial reality. One's reason is only an infinitesimal part of the faculty of universal consciousness, and hence our instrument of cognition is inadequate to know the Absolute as such. That is why a beginner approaches the idea of the Absolute with the process of the *via negativa* (the negative approach). We have read in the *Upaniṣad* the conclusive statement, *neti, neti:* "Not this (and even) not this." In the original Upaniṣadic statement, we do not read 'and even'. 'And even' is given as an explanatory aid by Sureśvara.

Śankara's famous dictum, *brahmasatyam jaganmithya,* means *"brahman* alone is the truth, and the transient phenomenon *(jagat),* is only appearance." The term, "appearance," is important. To whom does the world appear? The world appears to the senses and the mind as the agent of cognition. The agent is not the Absolute. It is the shimmering consciousness of an individuated person's ego or I-consciousness. There is certainly a difference between the sun that illuminates the world, and the image of the sun illuminating the world which is reflected in a dew drop. The sun in the dew drop is only an incidental occurrence. We cannot say there is no sun in it, because the sun's rays are there. There is a direct relationship between the emitting rays of the sun and its reflection in the dew drop. Essentially, individual persons are not very different from the mirroring dew drop except we have a more complex device of receiving the stimuli through our senses and then interpreting the stimulation in terms of certain configurations that we have come to generate with biologic and psychologic peculiarities of the organism. That is why the *Upaniṣad* categorically denies the truth of images that come as

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conversions of the light of the Self. This process of knowing the Absolute by contrasting it with the relative is called *tatastha lakṣaṇa. Tatastham* means obstacle. We presume the health of our body by observing our diseases. The disease is a *tatastham*, an obstacle caused in the free flow of life. The physiologic peculiarities of our senses and the interpretive mechanisms of our minds are responsible for focusing the consciousness on structurally configured images. This grand obstruction in life is beautifully described by Plato in his cave allegory given in the *Republic*. According to Plato, individuation in a physical body is a biologic imprisonment of the spirit which brings us to the compulsion of staring at our shadows all the time and identifying ourselves with our shadows. Plato also presents before us a relative truth and an absolute truth. The relative truth he calls "the visible," and the absolute, "intelligible." The term "intelligible" may not be convincing. That was improved in Bergsonian philosophy as the "intuitive."

The second method used by Indian philosophers to arrive at the Absolute is to postulate the basics. Basically, the Absolute is pure existence, pure subsistence, and pure bliss which is symbolized by the mystical sound-image, *AUM*. These have an intimate resemblance to terms like "omnipresence," "omniscience," and "omnipotence" in which "potent" is not to be interpreted as "powerful." It should rather be understood as "all-potential" or "of endless possibility." The reference is to the ground of all values.

Individually, we are *alpa*, or of negligible magnitude. Sitting in this body of flesh and blood and bones and dirt, one cannot easily experience the all-pervading reality. Our presence is transient. Our knowledge is only a flickering agitation in our nervous system that has no comparison to what is described as omniscience. Similarly, our ability to explore and exhaust possibilities is minimal, so we are helpless creatures. It is in this context that we invent and create the omnipresent, the omniscient, and the omnipotent so that we may not shrink into the void of nonexistence, darkness, and death. Here the *Upaniṣad* is giving us a forewarning of our limitations before we enter into the path of the spirit's adventure.

Brahman is described in the *śruti* as "one alone without a second" *(ekam ādvaitiyam)*. What do we understand by "one"? Is "one" an integer in the numbers of enumeration? If we simply say "one," it is only a sound. For it to make any sense, it must

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be put in a system of enumeration such as one, two, three, etc. Moses, the prophet of the Jewish people, insisted that there is only one God. Jesus Christ insisted that there is only one God. Mohammed Mustafa Karim, the prophet of Islam, insisted that there is only one God. The *Upaniṣads* also insist that there is only one truth. The Taoist goes into silence because he cannot choose one name to describe the one which can be described with ten thousand names. What is this indescribable, incomprehensible "one"? Am I one, or one with a second? Nobody thinks that he or she is more than one. Nobody thinks there is another who can substitute for him or her in every way. Therefore, everyone can honestly say, "I am one alone without a second." Think of this universe. Is it not one in spite of the moons and planets and suns, stars and galaxies, all that constitute it? Does it substitute for any other universe? No. There is only one universe without a second. If the ultimate truth is beginningless, endless, and indivisible, is there another truth? Can the truth ever be two? Does one truth substitute for another truth? The answer is "No." There is only one truth without a second. In that case, who am I? I am the one in which all are comprised. What is the world? The world is the one to which all belong. What is truth? That which does not leave anything outside it, i.e., the "All." What is God? All. If the All is one without a second, what is the problem? The problem is that when I hear, I am full of voices. Every voice I hear is of a different tonal formation. Every tonal formation brings to me a different mental image. Like the voices that fill me, all the time I am reacting to touches, such as somebody caressing me, fondling me, embracing me, kissing me, pinching me, exposing me to heat, exposing me to cold. I am pressed down by weight, I am lifted into heights. Where there is touch, there is a plurality of experiences. My eyes are too busy shifting from one object of vision to another. I compare and contrast the comely with the charming, the beautiful with the ugly, the bright with the dark, the bluish with the pink, the minute with the colossal. It is as if the uniqueness of what I see is not shared by another form. So I am tempted to say what is visible now is a form without a second. And if I see similarity, it is only a sport of my perceptual faculty to taunt me by making similarity and sameness where they can never be one. We are prone to tell lies to ourselves, to say, "This is that, and that is this." The paradox of the one and the many also confuses the cognizer in the exten-

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sive world of tastes and smells. The very definition of the Absolute as "one without a second" is to warn us against being lured into the second, the third, the fourth, and the many. This fallacy, or the paradox that exists between the one and the many, is resolved only in deep sleep where one is conscious neither of the only one, nor of the possibility of a second. The solution lies in total silence, total ignorance, total insensibility, total void, total death. And creatures are afraid of this. If silence caved in from all sides, creatures would make the loudest possible noise to assure themselves that they would not be swallowed by silence. If the slightest illness makes them bedridden, in all panic they run around to find the panacea that can restore them to their feverish activity. The very suggestion of death is enough to make a person give up all claims and surrender to whatever can promise redemption from death.

This paradox brings us to the original picture that was shown to us at the start of the *Upaniṣad:* "In the beginning, there was nothing because everything was enveloped by death. Death is none other than hunger, and therefore fear alone reigned." We are now back to this paradox. In a paradox, what is fundamental is the uncertainty that ensues from it which defeats the mind miserably. Uncertainty comes when there are two. Each one is vying with the other to claim the singled-out validity that can be proclaimed as the only truth. Thus the fight between the positive and the negative continues.

Is the Absolute a quantitative factor? Has the Absolute any mass, form, color, voice, taste, or system of reasoning? Why don't we play the game which is at hand? When you smile, is it an Absolute smile? When a tear drop rolls down your cheek, is it an Absolute tear drop? When you have met a flower in your garden, is it an Absolute flower? Or does it become non-Absolute because there are other flowers? How come all smiles are smiles, all tear drops are tears, all flowers are flowers, and every case of death an Absolute death? It is clear that there is no other, and there is no second. It is equally true to say, "What is seemingly second is also the Absolute one without a second." Every smile I give is my Absolute smile which I have not rehearsed unless I grin instead of smiling. Every tear drop that I shed has in it the whole meaning of my soul. The most honest anguish that I have is why philosophers do not see this simple truth. That means the *Upaniṣad* is presenting before us an age-old truth for the mil-

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lionth time, and it is a pity that it is still met by stone-eyed gazes. The most ancient question is to be answered again and again in one's own heart with a new vision which is one without a second.

Narayana Guru, in verse eighty-seven of the *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* says:

> Taking each kind alone, it exists;
> mutually, each excludes the other;
> when this is remembered, body and all such
> are neither real nor unreal; that is indescribable.

In the second chapter, fourth *brāhmaṇa*, the fifth mantra says:

> Yājñavalkya said: "Verily the husband is dear (to the wife) not for the sake of the husband, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that the husband is dear. Verily the wife is dear (to the husband) not for the sake of the wife, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that the wife is dear. Verily children are dear (to parents) not for the sake of the children, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self children are dear. Verily wealth is dear not for the sake of wealth, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that it is dear. Verily the *brāhmaṇa* is dear not for the sake of the *brāhmaṇa*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self the *brāhmaṇa* is dear. Verily the *kṣatriya* is dear not for the sake of the *kṣatriya*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that the *kṣatriya* is dear. Verily worlds are dear not for the sake of worlds, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily the *devas* are dear not for the sake of the *devas*, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily *bhūta* (beings) are dear not for the sake of the beings, my dear, but it is for the sake of the Self that they are dear. Verily all is dear not for the sake of all, my dear, but for the sake of the Self all is dear. The Self *(ātman)*, my dear Maitreyī, should verily be realized: should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon. *Ātman* is that which is heard, reflected on and meditated upon.

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To derive any sense from this mantra, one should know what the Self (*ātman*) is. Secondly, one should know what love is. In all religions, love is put on par with the Absolute, or the Supreme, or God. The *Upaniṣad* is not speaking of Self in the normal sense of the term. There is no adequate English term which can be given as a synonym of *ātman*. In Vedānta, the highest or the purest form of beatitude is called *ānanda*. It is not pleasure or happiness, or even bliss. *Ānanda* is the normative notion with which the existence, subsistence and intrinsic value of everything is measured. We have already seen that the Self is defined as "*sat, cit,* and *ānanda.*" If you take that in the sense of existence, subsistence, and a value form, the Absolute and the Self are the same. In the previous section, we have shown in which sense the Absolute is "one without a second." In the Jewish tradition, the highest value is *seftroth*, the mystical shape which lies at the basis of every other shape. In Judaism, God is not nameable, but God's main attributes can be pondered over. In Christianity, a compromise is made between Yahweh (Jehovah) as the Father, Christ (God walking among human beings in flesh and blood) as the son, and the Holy Spirit which can be the presence of God in all sentient beings. In Buddhism, the Absolute is identical with *nibbāna* which is rid of all defects and miseries. In Islam, Allah is the Absolute which is close to everyone, closer than the nerve of one's heart. Thus we do not have a common concept which is identical with the *ātman* spoken of here.

However, there are certain principles of homogeneity such as the universal and the particular, the all-embracing and the specifically manifested. In most religions, God and His attributes, the Self and its attributes, life and its attributes are explained by using analogies. The status of analogy in mystical philosophy is the same as that of experimentation in positive sciences. From a falling apple, the principle of gravitation can be inferred. Once that inference is accepted as a valid testimony of truth, we don't have to drop every object to prove how it is subjected to gravitational pull. Jesus uses a similar analogy when he says, "The way I am loved by my father in heaven, I love you." Simon and Andrew, James and Matthew, Mark and Luke, and John and Mary knew how Jesus loved them. From that, analogically, they could infer how God loved Jesus. This kind of argument is generally accepted.

In the fourth *brāhmaṇa*, the analogies given by Yājñavalkya

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to Maitreyī are of the same order, but of negative instances. When it is said that it is for the sake of the Self the husband is loved, Maitreyī should be able to make out that her love for Yājñavalkya is the love of the Self for what is dear to the Self. From this, two other conclusions arise. One is that what is true in oneself is not one's body, senses, or mind, but a greater reality which is to be recognized as the Self. Secondly, the Self is not just a noun. It has a functional reality. It can relate itself to a state which is endearing to itself. If Maitreyī loves Yājñavalkya, the Self in her finds the Self in Yājñavaikya endearing. The endearment here is on the basis of the homogeneity of the Self. In the Christian doctrine of love, this homogeneity is emphasized as a fundamental principle. That is why the fatherhood of God is made pivotal to the brotherhood of man. The father, son, and brother analogies belong to a religious consciousness of an anthropomorphic nature. In Vedānta, such analogies are not tenable. Vedānta is based on pure philosophy in which truth is given the highest recognition instead of God. The Vedāntin would rather think of absolute truth and relative truth than of the fatherhood of truth or the sonhood of truth. The father-son analogy is an illustration, while Vedānta refers to a pure principle which has an axiomatic status that need not be proved with examples. Thus we can draw a distinction between the philosophy of Vedānta and the theology of religion as similar to the difference between principles of pure mathematics and its application in the technologies of positive sciences.

Pure science and applied science both have their advantages and disadvantages. We shall first look into some of the disadvantages. If the Self is identified with absolute truth, the votary of it will be obliged to go into immediate total silence because any statement made thereon will be a relativistic conjecture of something specific. This is in principle opposed to the purity of the concept of the Absolute. The Absolute cannot have a beginning; the Absolute cannot have an end; the Absolute cannot have extension in space, or even location in it. No temporal reference to it can be made. The Absolute cannot have divisions, or structure, or function. Thus in our transactional world it becomes the most useless concept. The chain of cause and effect is inapplicable in an absolutist context. There is a tyranny of concepts which holds every absolutist term a captive. That is why the Vedāntin was obliged to say "one without a second."

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Let us take the conventional sense in which "God" is used. The first concept is, "In the beginning was God." Now the question comes, where did the beginning begin? Why should there be a God at the beginning? This is upheld by the famous causal argument, "Every effect comes from a cause. The world is an effect, and God is the first cause." This cannot be convincing because in the world itself we find the tree is caused by a seed, a chicken is caused by an egg, a child is caused by a father and mother. Thus, everything has a causal side and an effect side. So naturally one can ask, "What caused God?" If one says, "That would take us ad infinitum; therefore, let us begin with God," the sceptic will ask, "Why not let the world be the first cause? Why should we presume an unknown to be the cause of the known?" Here we are not arguing truth. We have simply become victims of a word concept which is determined by certain assumed meanings given to it such as "a cause can be only this much, and not more than that."

This tragedy has nothing to do either with truth or with God. We are caught in the vicious circle of the insufficiency of human reason. This has led to endless fights between theologians and philosophers. It was to avoid such a disadvantage that Jesus tried to impress upon his disciples the reality of the love which they had been experiencing in abundance. And in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya also resorts to a familiar experiential certitude by citing the love of the husband for the wife, and the love of the wife for the husband, or the parent for the child, and the child for the parent. This was also beautifully illustrated by Śri Ramakrishna with the analogy that a forecast bulletin of rain will not wet a man, even if he shakes the bulletin. The old proverb, "The map is not the territory," also conveys this simple truth. It is not through argument that one arrives at God. It is also not through argument that a woman arrives at the reality of her husband, or vice versa. The Self is that which knows. What is known on the one side is the knowledge of existence and the value of what is known to be existential. That is why the denial of one half automatically brings the denial of the denial also. So Yājñavalkya continues his dialogue with Maitreyi to help her to a more profitable realization by teaching her how there is an overall unity, even in things that look fragmented. Hence he calls her attention to the negative dynamics of what has been mechanically rejected.

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The Self looks into itself where the senses are confronted by objects of perceptual values, especially where the aesthetic glorification of feeling is roused. The Self also takes upon itself the grand interpretation of the entire universe irrespective of the special fields in which subtleties of all the intrigues of creation huddle together in their most complicated matrices. The third level which is by far the innermost joyous mirroring of the Self, is happening in the poetic heart of humanity. While these areas of Absolute certitude are known to us, many people are led away with the schemes of inferences. And at the sensory level, panoramas emphasizing the sky, the sun and moon, the starry heavens, lush green vegetation, desert lands, reflections in still waters, grimaces of the ferociously stormy sea and architectural miracles are displayed both overtly and in artistic presentations through the brush and chisel of the lovers of beauty as seen in so many picture galleries and museums. Innumerable are the pictures adored by people. A few to mention are the *Mona Lisa* of Leonardo Da Vinci, the *Pieta* of Michelangelo, *Guernica* of Picasso, and *The Potato Eaters* of Vincent Van Gogh. In each one of these, there is a magic which plays a different tune on the heart strings of people. Pictures and sculptures have a language which is not to be supplemented by words. They speak directly to the *ātman*, or soul. The mirror of art or panorama is held in the here and now right before our eyes. In the flicker of a moment, these instant realities take us to the perennial and the eternal.

There is an ever-continuing dialogue of the Self with the world, and the world with the Self going on in the cerebration of human beings in their mathematical quest for certitude. Douglas R. Hofstadter, in his *Godel, Escher, Bach*, speaks of mathematics as applied in every conceivable world:

> We have stressed the fact, above, that *internal* consistency of a formal system (together with an interpretation) requires that there be some *imaginable* world -- that is, a world whose only restriction is that in it, mathematics and logic should be the same as in our world -- in which all the interpreted theorems come out true. *External* consistency, however -- consistency with the external world -- requires that all theorems come out true in the *real* world. Now in the special case where one wishes to create a consistent formal system whose theorems are to

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be interpreted as statements of mathematics, it would seem that the difference between the two types of consistency should fade away, since, according to what we said above, *all imaginable worlds have the same mathematics as the real world.* Thus, in every conceivable world, 1 plus 1 would have to be 2; likewise, there would have to be infinitely many prime numbers; furthermore, in every conceivable world, all right angles would have to be congruent; and of course, through any point not on a given line there would have to be exactly one parallel line. . .

But wait a minute! That's the parallel postulate -- and to assert its universality would be a mistake, in light of what's just been said. If in all conceivable worlds the parallel postulate is obeyed, then we are asserting that non-Euclidean geometry is inconceivable, which puts us back in the same mental state as Saccheri and Lambert -- surely an unwise move. *But what, then, if not all of mathematics, must all conceivable worlds share?* Could it be as little as logic itself? Or is even logic suspect? Could there be worlds where contradictions are normal parts of existence -- worlds where contradictions are not contradictions?

Well, in some sense, by merely inventing the concept, we have shown that such worlds are indeed conceivable; but in a deeper sense, they are also quite inconceivable. (This in itself is a little contradiction.) Quite seriously, however, it seems that if we want to be able to communicate at all, we have to adopt some common base, and it pretty well has to include logic. (There are belief systems which reject this point of view -- it is too logical. In particular, Zen embraces contradictions and non-contradictions with equal eagerness. This may seem inconsistent, but then being inconsistent is part of Zen, and so...what can one say?)

Is Number Theory the Same in All Conceivable Worlds?

If we assume that *logic* is part of every conceivable world,...is that all? Is it really conceivable that, in some worlds, there are not infinitely many primes? Would it not seem necessary that numbers should obey the same laws in all conceivable worlds? Or...is the concept

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"natural number" better thought of as an undefined term, like "POINT" or "LINE"? In that case, number theory would be a bifurcated theory, like geometry: there would be standard and nonstandard number theories. But there would have to be some counterpart to absolute geometry: a "core" theory, an invariant ingredient of all number theories which identified them as number theories rather than, say, theories about cocoa or rubber or bananas. It seems to be the consensus of most modern mathematicians and philosophers that there *is* such a core number theory, which ought to be included, along with logic, in what we consider to be "conceivable worlds." This core of number theory, the counterpart to absolute geometry -- is called *Peano arithmetic*. . . Also, it is now well established -- as a matter of fact as a direct consequence of Godel's Theorem -- that number theory *is* a bifurcated theory, with standard and nonstandard versions. Unlike the situation in geometry, however, the number of "brands" of number theory is infinite, which makes the situation of number theory considerably more complex.

For *practical* purposes, all number theories are the same. In other words, if bridge building depended on number theory (which in a sense it does), the fact that there are different number theories would not matter, since in the aspects relevant to the real world, all number theories overlap. The same cannot be said of different geometries; for example, the sum of the angles in a triangle is 180 degrees only in Euclidean geometry; it is greater in elliptic geometry, less in hyperbolic. There is a story that Gauss once attempted to measure the sum of the angles in a large triangle defined by three mountain peaks, in order to determine, once and for all, which kind of geometry really rules our universe. It was a hundred years later that Einstein gave a theory (general relativity) which said that the geometry of the universe is determined by its content of matter, so that no one geometry is intrinsic to space itself. Thus to the question, *"Which geometry is true?"* nature gives an ambiguous answer not only in mathematics, but also in physics.[49]

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Mathematical logic stands abreast of poetic surmises. The great poet, Robert Frost, says, "You have to believe me because I'm a bard." And the following are the words of Walt Whitman from *Leaves of Grass*:

A great city is that which has
the greatest men and women,
If it be a few ragged huts it is still
the greatest city in the whole world.

* * *

The place where a great city stands
is not the place of stretch'd wharves,
docks, manufactures, deposits of produce merely,
Nor the place of ceaseless salutes of new-comers
or the anchor-lifters of the departing,
Nor the place of the tallest and costliest buildings
or shops selling goods from the rest of the earth,
Nor the place of the best libraries and schools,
nor the place where money is plentiest,
Nor the place of the most numerous population.

Where the city stands with the
brawniest breed of orators and bards,
Where the city stands that is belov'd by these,
and loves them in return and understands them,
Where no monuments exist to heroes
but in the common words and deeds,
Where thrift is in its place, and prudence is in its place,
Where the men and women think lightly of the laws,
Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases,
Where the populace rise at once
against the never-ending audacity of elected persons,
Where fierce men and women pour forth
as the sea to the whistle of death
pours its sweeping and unript waves,
Where outside authority enters always
after the precedence of inside authority,
Where the citizen is always the head and ideal,
and President, Mayor, Governor and what not.

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are agents for pay,
Where children are taught to be laws to themselves,
and to depend on themselves,
Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs,
Where speculations on the soul are encouraged,
Where women walk in public processions
in the streets the same as the men,
Where they enter the public assembly
and take places the same as the men;
Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands,
Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,
Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,
Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,
There the great city stands.

* * *

How beggarly appear arguments before a defiant deed!
How the floridness of the materials of cities
shrivels before a man's or woman's look!

All waits or goes by default till a strong being appears;
A strong being is the proof of the race
and of the ability of the universe,
When he or she appears materials are overaw'd,
The dispute on the soul stops,
The old customs and phrases are confronted,
turn'd back, or laid away.

What is your money-making now? what can it do now?
What is your respectability now?
What are your theology, tuition, society,
traditions, statute-books, now?
Where are your jibes of being now?
Where are your cavils about the soul now? 50

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APPENDIX III

The fourth *brāhmaṇa* of the second *adhyāya* begins with this dialogue between Yājñavalkya and his wife, Maitreyī:

> "Maitreyī!" said Yājñavalkya, "lo, verily, I am about to renounce this life, my dear. Well, let me end your relationship with this Kātyāyanī."
>
> At this Maitreyī said: "Even if this whole earth replete with wealth be mine, venerable sir, will it make me immortal?" "No," said Yājñavalkya, "Your life will be exactly like that of people well provided with materials, but there is no prospect of immortality through wealth."
>
> Maitreyī replied: "What shall I do with that through which I cannot be immortal? Tell me, venerable sir, of that alone which you know (to be the means of immortality)."
>
> Yājñavalkya said: "Ah! you have (always) been dear to me, my beloved, and now what you say is dear to my heart. Come, sit down, I shall explain it to you. But while I explain, concentrate upon it."

In the opening mantra, Yājñavalkya declares his resolution to change his current life style, that of a householder (*gṛhastha*). *Gṛha* means "family." One who is maintaining a family is *gṛhastha*. If such a person changes his state, he renounces his spouse, his children, and his ownership of movable and immovable wealth. When Yājñavalkya says, "Well, let me end your relationship with this Kātyāyanī," he is indicating that he wants to settle what belongs to him with his two wives, Kātyāyanī and Maitreyī. He does not say it directly, but it is understood that he meant to divide his possessions between them. Yājñavalkya had two kinds of possessions, the first being his children, his house, and his estate. Normally people think of these physical possessions as one's wealth. Maitreyī, being a very wise person, knew

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that Yājñavalkya had another possession, his wisdom. If he wanted to settle accounts with his wives by giving due shares of his possessions, Maitreyī thought that in all fairness her husband should share with her the wisdom he possessed. Instead of directly asking for it, she made the rishi himself state the worthlessness of children, house, landed properties, and cows decorated with gold to a person whose only goal in life is the realization of the Self and the gaining of immortality. Yājñavalkya had decided to give up his marital relationships with Maitreyī and Kātyāyanī, which meant that he did not have any desire to gratify sexual urges through his physical association with them. He had decided not to have the security of a home which he could claim as his own. He had decided not to have his children, born of Kātyāyanī, give his last rites on the occasion of his death. He had decided to have no power over anyone on the basis of his physical possession of wealth. But he had not decided to renounce his knowledge. Maitreyī found it an opportune moment to make it explicit to Yājñavalkya that she did not desire to have sex with him. She had no intention of bearing a child for him. She did not desire him to give her the protection of a home or food or maintenance. She was only asking him to share with her what he himself did not desire to renounce: his knowledge.

Needless to say, Maitreyī's purity of desire put her on par with her own husband's clear intentions. That automatically severed her relationship with Yājñavalkya as his wife. Their marriage was revoked. They became two free human beings. It was entirely up to Yājñavalkya to teach her if he wanted. Similarly, Maitreyī was free to learn from Yājñavalkya not as a wife, but as a dear disciple, if she wished. This naturally pleased Yājñavalkya. He possessed *dhana* (physical wealth) and *jñāna* (spiritual values). Even the greatest renouncer cannot renounce his knowledge. He can only relinquish his physical possessions. So there was nothing unfair in Maitreyī's request. Yājñavalkya asked her to come closer to him and sit near him to listen with the intention of pondering over what he was about to say. An invitation from a guru, or rather, the permission he gives, to sit close by with attention so that he may reveal truth to the disciple is called the "Upaniṣadic context." *Upa* means "near." *Ni* means "with reverence." *Ṣad* means "to sit." Thus we find that, from family discussions of husband and wife, Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī move away into the Upaniṣadic relationship of a guru and

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disciple. Until then, Maitreyī was duty bound to Yājñavalkya as his wife (*dharmacārinī*). When she was released from the obligations of a wife, she gained the status of a *brahmacārinī*, a fellow traveller walking on the path of truth.

This dialogue also prepares the student of the *Upaniṣad* to continue studying the succeeding *brāhmaṇas* which are intrinsically connected with the propositions presented in the first two *adhyāyas*. The first *adhyāya* began with the reference to death as *aśvamedha*, the horse sacrifice. It was followed by the presentation of death in all its horrid totality which showed how the struggle with death greatly elaborates the theme of life. In the third *adhyāya*, death is once again taken as the main problem to be resolved. Before we go into that chapter, let us examine some important aspects of renunciation *(sannyāsa)*.

The Indian concept of *sannyāsa* has three historical stages: the prehistoric concept, the medieval concept and the modern concept. Even in the medieval period, the prehistoric concept was held as valid. Similarly, the modern concept also has in it some traditional beliefs. In this *Upaniṣad*, the concept is first introduced as a spiritual necessity of the rishi, Yājñavalkya. The *Hindu Law* of India refers to Yājñavalkya's renunciation in the very beginning because the Hindu Marriage Act is based on Yājñavalkya's *smṛti*. The common belief in India is that marriage between a man and a woman cannot be dissolved except by the death of one of the spouses. Yet we see the paradox of India's best spiritual teacher announcing to his wives his intention to dissolve his marital relationship with them. In that way, the precedent was set by Yājñavalkya himself. Another convention which came from Yājñvalkya's dissolution of his marriages on the basis of his spiritual purpose was the duty of a husband to make adequate arrangements for the equitable sharing of his possessions among his wives. This is also cited in the Hindu Law, and thus the fourth *brāhmaṇa* is historically of prime importance in understanding both the status of the householder and of the *sannyāsin*.

Sannyāsa implies the renunciation of sex, progeny and social security. The recognition of virginity as a spiritual virtue is an archetypal notion which has been regarded as valid in different parts of the world in various cultures. In world religions, this notion became particularly emphasized because of the Buddha's institution of *bhikku*-hood which made it obligatory for his disci-

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ples to accept the vow of chastity. Then came the story of the immaculate conception of Mary. Those who accept Jesus as their spiritual bridegroom maintain their vow of virginity to this day. Over time, ideals which began with the spiritual conviction of the purity of the soul became mixed up with legendary social practises which have in them a blend of the rational and the irrational. Buddha's example was followed by Śankara in the institution of *sannyāsa* which came be known as the *daśanāmi sannyāsis*. The *pañcasīla* of Buddha which is binding on all members of his *saṅgha* became obligatory for Śankara's school of *sannyāsa* also. The ideals of the Buddhist *saṅgha* have much in common with the ten commandments of Moses. The first of the five-fold disciplines obligatory for a Buddhist monk is that of not hurting any sentient being *(ahimsa)* and not dispossessing anyone of whatever they own. The second is to agree to live with whatever sustenance one gets through the benevolence of nature. This is essentially a vow of poverty. The third is not to spend one's time in fruitless talk or gossip, but to live pondering on higher values. The fourth is not to corrupt one's faculty of clear thinking and judgement by taking any food or drink that will have an adverse effect on the mind. The fifth is to walk always in the path of righteousness and not to indulge in any moral deviation. Thus, on the whole, the stress is ethical.

This was not the original purpose of the ancient concept of *sannyāsa* which took into consideration the purpose of attaining absolute union with the Supreme Self. Three basic instincts which prompt a person to find ways and means of gratification are taken into consideration. As a corporeal being, a person is in need of nourishment. One's hunger is to be appeased and thirst to be quenched. This is the vegetative need which humans share with all other living beings. So, naturally, the greatest challenge to a person is finding food. This is taken seriously in all religions. In the *Old Testament*, we read the story of Moses being confronted with the hunger of his followers whom he was leading to their deliverance from the tyranny of the Pharaoh of Egypt. In another way, the same story appears in the life of Christ. The multitude that followed him became hungry, and Jesus wanted his disciples to feed them at a time and place where food could not be procured. Jesus satisfied the multitude with five loaves of bread and two fish. We also hear the Buddhist story of the great famine in which all were fed through the unique example of

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Supria, a small girl. In the Bible itself, we read of Jesus turning to his disciples and asking them why they were vexed about the insecurity of the hunger of the morrow and how they would clothe themselves. When Adam and Eve were found disobedient by Yahweh, he cursed them by stating that they would be obliged to live by making bread with the sweat of their brows. The one instinct that we see behind all these stories is the emphasis on self-preservation. One gives up one's security when one renounces one's possessions. A man is meant to be a breadwinner for his wife and children, and a woman is traditionally considered to be the keeper of the hearth. It is considered to be her duty to make food and drink to feed her husband and children. The marriage contract is rooted in self-preservation. Together they provide for each other. One of the most ancient prayers of the *Upaniṣads* commences with the lines, "Let us together be protected. Let us together be nourished. Let us together derive the energy from our nourishment. Let us together shine forth in our strength. Let no discordance come between us." It is this covenant that is discarded when one decides to leave one's home of safety and mutual care by taking to *sannyāsa*.

Self-preservation is not only the preservation of one person's life, but also the preservation of the whole species. According to Hindu theory, no one totally dies. The five elements of the body return to the elements, the life breath goes into the universal winds, and the essence of one's life goes into one's children. One continues in one's progeny. If one decides not to be united with a spouse in wedlock, there will not be progeny, and the species will come to its termination with the death of the individual. Although sexual gratification is considered to be the highest form of bliss, an individual can experience the pleasures of the senses and the mind even when the motivation is only to continue the species. It is almost like a homicidal act not to marry and beget children. This brings a person to a greater peril than discarding the promise of the security of a homestead. One needs one's whole mind and soul and strength to transcend the distractions that come from one's physical self to seek and find the pure state of the Self which is beyond all relativistic conditionings. So one cannot afford to lose any time that is left in this life. That makes it imperative for a person to turn away from the obligations of pleasing a spouse, being responsible for offspring, and maintaining the social contract expected by relatives, friends and country

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of origin. So one prefers to have a civic death. One is willing to die if natural providence does not hold one's life bound to one's body. One is willing to forego the sharing of life with anyone other than the Supreme. The only benefit one seeks is the benefit of one's Self which can in no way be separated from the Supreme.

This is to some extent exemplified in the life of Jesus where his will and the will of God are not two. In the *Upaniṣadic* context, the relationship is not that of God and man, nor that of the creator and the created. It is rather of the seeker of truth, and truth. Thus everything which is colored by the demands of the body, the distractions of the senses and the urges of the mind is considered to be relativistic. These limitations come from the embodiment of the Self in the impermanent consciousness which is subject to being lost in the unconscious, distorted by the hallucinations of dreams, and conditioned by sensory data. One comes to the conclusion that truth alone is, and it is unconditional and non-relativistic. Time, space, and psycho-physicality are all seen to be superimposed ignorance. It is on this basis that the threefold rejection is opted for. Renunciation is the giving up of a companion in life and progeny for continuation, and the turning away from all the promises of security. This can sound very harsh. Life is considered to be a state of the imprisoned splendor of the Self.

In the second stage, *sannyāsa* becomes an office, just like a house-holder's office. Instead of getting into blood relationships, one agrees to live with a larger circle whose bond of friendship comes from a unity of faith, such as *dharma* of which Buddha speaks, or the *sampradāya*, spiritual hierarchy, instituted by Śankara. Probably the Christian practice of congregates of the same faith making their own monasteries and nunneries was modeled on the Buddhist style carried to central Asia, the borders of Alexandria and the Mediterranean. When the first woman was to be admitted into a Buddhist order and a female order including the discipline of renunciation was to be founded, Buddha predicted the institution of renunciation would not last for more than five hundred years. One may see in this some sort of male chauvinism, but the two major roles which Christianity afterwards had to play in the life of humanity developed into two disciplines of Christian *sannyāsa*. They can be termed as piety and works. The words are slightly misleading. When we think of piety, we think of devotional worship, prayers, and fasting. And

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when we think of work, we think of hard labor. But piety and work came to manifest differently. Today, the largest number of Christian females who are the models of virginity are either teachers, nurses, or those who spend most of their time attending to the woes of their fellow human beings. They are hard-working, and their work is dedicated to Jesus. Once Jesus declared to his disciples, "When I came to you hungry, you did not feed me. When I came to you thirsty, you did not give me water. When I came to you in rags, you did not clothe me. When I came to you sick, you did not take care of me." In fact, it is this vision which a pious Christian woman gets when she feeds, when she clothes, when she nurses, when she takes care of children and educates them. This is what is regarded as piety. The men who are drawn to Jesus have mostly gone into the work of the organizational administration which St. Paul exemplified in his administrative work of spreading churches.

In modern India, when Vivekananda revived *sannyāsa*, he was inspired by the Christian dedication to service, but today's *sannyāsa* in India is a very superficial imitation of the Christian example. The subject of *sannyāsa* was revalued and restated in the *Bhagavad Gīta* in which a clear distinction is made between renunciation and relinquishment *(tyāga)*. The common ideal of both is one if you consider your life as a sacrificial model in which you live not for your own personal good or gratification, but to bring good to all. When a sacrificial offering is burned to ashes, nothing is left except the light it radiated and the fragrance with which the atmosphere is filled. A variation of this ideal is to make your life an offering to God. And another variation is not to give up your agency of work, but only the benefits. In the present we are somewhat confused about the ideals which Yājñavalkya opted for in *sannyāsa*. His own clarification of this will be presented in the third *adhyāya*.

In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.2.5-6), we read as follows:

Attaining Him, the seers (*ṛṣi*)
who are satisfied with knowledge,
Who are perfected souls *(kṛtātman)*,
from passion free *(vītarāga)*, tranquil --
Attaining Him who is the universally omnipresent,
those wise,
Devout souls *(yuktātman)* into the All itself do enter.

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They who have ascertained the meaning
of the Vedānta-knowledge,
Ascetics *(yatī)* with natures purified through
the application of renunciation *(saṁnyāsa-yoga)* --
They in the *Brahma*-worlds at the end of time
Are all liberated beyond death.

Again we read in mantra eight,

As the flowing rivers in the ocean
Disappear, quitting name and form,
So the knower, being liberated from name and form,
Goes unto the Heavenly Person, higher than the high.

In verse thirty of Chapter Three of the *Bhagavad Gīta*, we read,

mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi
saṁnyasyādhyātmacetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā
yudhyasva vigatajvaraḥ

Renouncing in Me (the Absolute) all works, coming to be without expectations or possessiveness, with a full awareness about the Self, do fight with fever gone.

It may look very strange that Arjuna was asked to be a *saṁnyāsī* by renouncing everything in the Absolute, and then do the horrid action of fighting. The definition of *saṁnyāsa* is given in verse one, Chapter Six of the *Bhagavad Gīta*: "Without depending on the results of action, he who does necessary action, he is a renouncer *(saṁnyāsī)* and also a contemplative *(yogī)*, not he who has (merely) given up sacrificial fire, or who (merely) abstains from ritualist (or other) action." Again in verse four of Chapter Six, we read, "When however, neither in the objects of the senses nor in actions one finds attachment, such a man who has renounced willful desires for particularized ends is said to be one who has ascended to yoga." In verse twenty-four of Chapter Nine of the *Bhagavad Gīta*, we read, "I am indeed the Enjoyer, as also the Lord of all sacrifices; but they fall indeed who do not understand Me according to first principles." In Chapter Thirteen, verse seven, the following qualities are given as the attributes of a

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wise person: "Freedom from conventional pride, unpretentiousness, non-hurting, non-retaliating forbearance, straightforwardness, loyal support of the teacher *(acārya)*, purity, steadfastness, and state of self-withdrawal."

In the *Udgītha Brāhmaṇa*, the mantra that is given for emancipation implies the true spirit of *sannyāsa*. *Sannyāsa* is relating to what is valuable and giving up what is irrelevant. In the mantra, *asato mā sadgamaya, asat* (untruth) is to be given up as irrelevant, and *sat* (truth) is to be accepted as relevant. Similarly, in the mantra, *tamaso mā jyotir gamaya, tamas* (darkness) is irrelevant, and *jyotir* (light) is relevant. In the mantra, *mṛtyor mā amṛtam gamaya, mṛtyu* (death) is irrelevant, and *amṛtam* (immortality) is relevant. The compelling powers of sensual affinity to objects of pleasure can appear to a person as existentially the most real. Between spouses, everything about the other, such as their endearing voice, tickling touches of embrace, kiss, and copulation, the most pleasing look of their comely form, the nourishing care which they give, and above all, the essence of memory which is like the fragrance of the other are so binding that there is a recurring pull towards the love object. Only when the existential factor in the beloved is seen as an image of universal existence can one move away from the specified object of love to the entire universe which is only a small fraction of the totality of existence. In the *Gīta* we read that it is with just a fragment of the Absolute that the entire world is reflected as a seeming reality. There is a very deceptive illusory factor which can be easily seen: if the unit of husband and wife represented the total existence of reality, they would be huddling to each other in an eternal embrace or an eternal kiss from which they could never pull back, even for a second. Yet even in an act of copulation, the male and female become equally exhausted and, in haste, want to pull away from each other, if possible, to be left alone. What is so attractive, enjoyable, and even blissful can soon turn out to be repulsive and nauseating. This can especially be seen in lovers who lose their faith in each other and come to consider the other as a mortal enemy. There is evidently an illusory snare which makes one critical of the reality of the attachment. It is in reference to this that Yājñavalkya declared to his wives that he was opting for renunciation.

The second aspect of renunciation relates to not having attachment to one's children. It is easy to understand that a tree

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with a million pollinated flowers is the same tree that becomes epitomized in every seed that comes forth from each flower. In the same manner, the tree of life, the all-pervading biologic principle, is bringing forth all children in the world. It is the same life that is becoming manifested with hands and legs and the physical organism of a human being, a monkey, a tiger, a moth, a gnat, a snake, or a fish. It is real blindness to have preference and a sense of responsibility for only one or two of life's manifestations. That is why parental attachment to children as an instinctive compulsion is looked upon as blindness. If a person is released from that blindness, his or her love will go to every ant and bee and wasp, to birds of all feathers and shapes, to reptiles of all kinds, and to every plant and animal in this world. The person who sees the universality of life will be more compassionate than millions of parents put together. That is the light one should seek, not the light which creates the urge to put one child alone in one's lap for fond kisses and admiration.

The third and last aspect of the act of renunciation is giving up the ignorance of mistaken identity. For example, water can be the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the Mississippi, the Volga, or the Nile. It can be a dewdrop, or the ice sitting on the peaks of the Alps or the Himalayas. It is all just water. Fragmenting the general and attributing specificity to it is thinking of the immortal as mortal. The entire land we possess here is only a little part of a clod called Earth. It is foolish to divide it into square feet or square miles and say, "This is my territory, and that is your territory." We read the following in the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayam:

This ruined caravanserai, called Earth --
Stable of Day-with-Night, a piebald steed;
Former pavilion of a hundred Jamsheds;
A hundred Bahrams' one-time hall of state;

A Palace gorged in by gigantic Bahram --
The vixen whelps there and the lion nods.
Bahram, who hunted none but onagers,
Lies tumbled in a pitfall called the grave.

Each rose or tulip bed that you encounter
Is sure to mark a king's last resting-place,

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While scented violets, rising from black soil,
Record the burial of some lovely girl.

What is transient which is maintained only between two ticks of a clock is immortalized by the foolish. The wise have not come and are not leaving, so there is nothing to give up and nothing to gain. That is the last prayer for emancipation from death to deathlessness.

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APPENDIX IV

At the very outset of his instruction of Maitreyī, Yājñavalkya makes it clear that the *a priori* wisdom of the *Upaniṣad* is to be listened to with full attention and devotion. The highest teaching of the *Upaniṣad* is epitomized in the instruction, "One should meditate on all aspects of the totality *(brahman)* as the Supreme Self *(ātman)*" (I.4.7). The aspirant meditates on this aphorism after listening to the *śruti* reiterated by an authentic person as one's own guru provided the guru is an accomplished *brahmavid* and an erudite knower of the *śruti* - a *śrotriya.*

When a person chants the sacred mantra *AUM*, the verbalization of *A*, *U* and *M* is suggestive of the chanter's wakeful, dream, and deep sleep states. Then the person goes further into the deep and eternal silence which is inaudible but fills the entire consciousness as the inexpressible, imperishable verity of *turīya* (the fourth state). Similarly, *śravana* or listening is to be followed by a silent meditation in which all specific idea formations are dissolved in the unnameable Self.

A beginner may not know how to proceed with the discipline of unifying the multitudinous proliferation of consciousness in the wakeful and dream states which come to manifest as the *prapañca* - various pentagonal formations such as the five elements, the five objects of interest, the five sensory apperceptions, and the five functional automations of the vital energies. Hence, it is necessary for a disciple to keep his or her body, words, and mind in perfect attunement with those of the guru. It is with this intent that the rishi of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* presents Ajātaśatru as a model teacher and has him say to Gārgya compassionately, "I shall enlighten you (about *brahman*)" (II.1.15).

The instruction to meditate on *brahman* as *ātman* is called *vidyā sūtra* by Sureśvara. *Sūtra* is the conjoining thread. Although *ātman* is invisible and all-pervasive and transcends the limits of time and space, it occurs to a personalized organism like a human being as an item of illumination. This light of aware-

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ness within the phenomenal scheme is felt in the individual's sensory system and memory storage and as the flash of judgment and consequent affectation about a circumlimited item of awareness. Each such illumination is like the fluorescent shining of a firefly in the night or a dewdrop that is made to glitter kaleidoscopically by a gleam of sunlight.

In and through individuated experience, the thread of *ātman* glows with the intention of unifying specific instances into a contiguous knowledge of the Self. Thus, *brahman* can be meditated on by recognizing the Self in and through the proliferated variegations which appear as the phenomenal shimmering in the wakeful and the dream state. For this, the meditator has to catch what precedes an illumination and what follows the glow of awareness. This is like diving into deep sleep or the causal consciousness and refusing to succumb to the breaking up of the Self into instances of display.

After listening to the teacher's pronouncement of the *a priori* truth, the disciple closes his or her eyes to efface the physical distinction between the disciple and the preceptor. Then the natural oscillation of modulating consciousness *(bhāna)* is substituted by the intuitive flash of holistic apperception which is the heart and soul of the testimony of *śabda*. To lighten the burden of the student the teacher may suggest examples *(dṛṣṭānta)*, just as a master scientist might give an exercise to an apprentice of bombarding a postulation of science with experimental variations of the cause and effect relationship through changing the patterns of relevant experimentation. The student cannot gain mastery of the teacher's pronouncement without making the aphorism an essential fact of his or her spiritual identification. This is how the disciple and the guru are linked by in a given knowledge situation. The thread that relates the understanding of the disciple and the vision of the teacher reflects the *sūtra* that relates the Self with the cosmos or the Absolute.

Sureśvara gives another aphoristic direction to the aspirant: "A man has his intellect purified by (i.e., through) the performance of the daily action (*nitya karma*) etc.; later he comes to have (i.e. develop) the notion that the result arising from the cause in the form of the entire action is to be blamed." 51 It is true that illumination comes like a flash of wisdom. And, it is the revelation of such knowledge that establishes in a person an unchanging attitude for the rest of one's life. Sureśvara endorses

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this view, but he maintains the belief that such a revelation will not come by itself unless a person seriously aspires for it. The seriousness of one's search depends on how one prepares oneself to gain such an insight. Every passing moment is an opportunity to have a hard look at the facts of one's life to see what blemishes are there that can be steadily removed.

The body-mind-soul system is like a complex mechanism (*yantra*) which has to function with technological perfection and a purposiveness that will take one closer to the goal one is looking for. A timely correction can save a lot of degenerative waste. According to Sureśvara, the major flaw in the living organism comes from unintelligent planning of life. Most people program life without taking into consideration, on the one side, the environmental facilities and anomalies, and, on the other side, the inner structural faculties available for functional operation. The science of natural economy needs to be constantly in our service. Energy, time, facilities and associations are all to be used with precise economic insight. This not only minimizes action situations, but also brings a greater light of distinctive perception to our overall understanding, enabling us to conceive of our programs properly, and to execute them with ease and perfection. This possibility is what Sureśvara recognizes as *kramamukti* (systematically achieved release or liberation).

Sureśvara wants to familiarize us with the circumstances that will lead us to the realization that everything is not well with either our inception or the instruments we have acquired to execute the immanent programs of the life we are expected to give expression to. He says as follows: "Having well seen that it (viz. the fruit of action) is full of blame, a person turns averse to the result of previous performed actions. His intellect being stirred by impressions and memories of the misery of the transmigratory existence, he has a desire to abandon it (viz. the transmigratory existence) and (also) the wish for acquiring the means for abandoning the same; he gives up all the desires, and has then determined the true nature of the individual consciousness." 52

Previous actions are testimonies to the accomplishment of desires as well as the frustrations which come from trying to actualize certain unaccomplishable desires. Sureśvara calls those actions, *āgraja*, which means "previously gained possessions." Sureśvara even traces them back to the *hiraṇyagarbha*, the phenomenal promise of life. We have seen that the promise of life

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was preceded by the threat of death. Life's utility was very much that of a consumable fodder for the hungry mouth of death. The path of entrance into life is identifiable with the doors of fear and immanent death. This is to be again and again pushed away with the cunning of one's own intellect. We are squarely placed within a frame of reference of polarization between death and life, fear and hope, action and reaction.

Phenomenal creation is not a gracious act that brings an occasion to live the abundance of grace. It is a carrier of a negative load of fresh challenges and tireless action to reclaim the balance and harmony which can only be incidental and short lived. Therefore, individuals who happen to be occupying the time and space of creation again and again face serious frustration. A frustrated person always wants to run away but frustration is part and parcel of the time to which we belong, the space where we are established, the cause that generated us, and a purposiveness which is not a promise of eternal goodness. Thus, our plight is very much like that of a bear standing on a hot plate frantically dancing to escape death while being rhythmically tuned to the compulsion of the music generated by the throb of phenomenality. We cannot stand on a hot plate nor can we dance towards our escape, for the dance is as cruel as the heat. According to Sureśvara, it is in such a world that we are caught and from which we wish to get our freedom.

The model given by Sureśvara of a liberated person is: "The man, who has destroyed the cause of the transmigratory existence by means of his knowledge of the nature of reality (viz. the *brahman*) and his own self (vis. the individual consciousness) and (thereby) destroyed the entire transmigratory existence, becomes liberated." [53] Here he uses the word *vimuktī* for liberation. When a person is hungry, thirsty, and weary, it is as if every living cell is possessed by a sense of uncertainty, exhaustion, and an inability to coordinate with others to make a joint effort to achieve a physical purpose. It is like being in an inanimate state of self-alienating negativity. However, if such a person partakes of nourishing food, he or she will feel released from the captivity of physical delinquency. This is a partial state of *vimuktī*, liberation. If a person is stung by sexual desire and his mind can't focus on anything other than manipulating the sex object to carry out his sexual release, he is possessed by a very strong obsession. This state is another example of being bound. When this psychic

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state is sublimated, great peace comes. That is another case of being released from a state of psychic blindness or imprisonment. Thus, that person becomes a *mukta*, the released. If a person is struck with the idea of being annihilated and feels there is no way to escape death, there comes a benumbing state. However, when you come to the conviction that you have all the resources of life with nothing lacking and that you have a benign Self which is shining on all with love and magnanimity, you feel released from the bondage of fear. Psychological transmigration from one state of consciousness to another can be an individual cause of degradation in spite of the individual being a part of the cosmic system. Thus, each person has to converge one's being to one's central Self which is a constant in one's life of consciousness, and should feel that effortlessly, by sheer wish, that one can sit firm in the center of one's being. This is what Sureśvara intends when he states that the meaning of attaining and affirming the knowledge of one's individual consciousness from that center of being is like the effulgent rays of the sun emanating from its eternal source and spreading in all directions to preside over the magnum of infinity. That is what is referred to as being in resonance with one's knowledge of the nature of reality. Such a person understands what bondage is and what liberty is. According to Sureśvara, bondage is *samsāratva* and release is *muktatva*. Each person can become free by attuning oneself to both the individual and the Absolute to which one belongs.

Sureśvara does not think that renunciation is an obligatory ritual one has to do to meet the contingency of one's transmigratory existence. He says, "Whatever is the product of ignorance (becomes) the cause of aversion (to the transmigratory existence). The abandoning of the product of ignorance effects of itself, owing to one's being averse to it; (it is) not (effected) by Vedic injunction. That renunciation is the means to ascertaining the true nature of the *brahman* is not known (except from *śruti*). And this (lit. that) is prescribed here (i.e. in the *śruti*)." 54 It is not common in society to find someone who is always in perfect at-one-ment with the Absolute. The goal of Self-realization, the path leading to it, and the explanation of its nature is found only in *a priori* text books. Renunciation or relinquishment are not the path to realization. One has to find and accept as a model a person from whom one can receive into one's own life, as in a process of osmosis, the high attainment of Self-realization as acquired and es-

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tablished in the model. Normally, this model is one's own guru. In the *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* of Narayana Guru, he says, "Do not wake up again and do not sleep again; remain fully established in knowledge, as knowledge; and if that is not possible, relate yourself in your thought, word, and deed to a living contemplative to whom the four-fold secrets of the *praṇava* are known without any doubt." We have two alternatives if we want to renounce. One is totally obliviating one's ego sense so that one can remain as an eternal witness of the Absolute and see the world as an expression of the Absolute. The other is cultivating a transparency of vision of the Absolute, even when, by the intrigues of nature, one seemingly undergoes all the vicissitudes of life.

According to Sureśvara, "The *brahman*, the highest has been explained in the words, '(The *brahman* is) not this, not this', after showing it (to be) apart from what is characterized as cause and effect, viz. that which has arisen from ignorance of the *brahman*." [55] The greatest paradox is the most known, and what constitutes the very basis of transactional life is what we call ignorance in the present situation. In the Western approach, to decide the characteristic of the epistome, we begin from what is rationally known to individuals which is shared in the collective consciousness, as objects of sensory observation, and as mathematical relationships that exist between visible objects of perception. In Sureśvara's discipline, which is also Śankara's, and therefore Upaniṣadic, the entire phenomenality of the world is treated as if it is of no consequence. Our starting point is being.

Psychologists from the West who arrived at the notion of the unconscious qualified their study as a study of the mind in depth, as if the unconscious is the hidden basis for the manifestation of the pre-conscious and conscious. Similarly, the rishi is looking from the depth, but speaks of a partless whole which is the ground on which the manifestation of multitudinous effects is superimposed. The Indian philosopher looks at the basis of mind from the ground of cause, whereas the Western psychologist is primarily concerned with effects. Thus, Indian methodology is in absolute contrast with the methodology adopted to explain the epistemology of Western science. This inevitable obversion of philosophical truth is itself a discipline, whereby the inner organ which functions as interrogation, recall of memory, judgment, and value affectivity is to be revised to suit the Indian approach to get at the meaning of meaning.

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Brahman (the Absolute) can be the most dynamic expression of the highest reality, and it can be the basic urge for a person to attain perfection in this very life. *Brahman* can also be a philosophical cushion on which to speculate, adding one more meaningless word to the verbiage of religion and philosophy. We should either dismiss the word from our vocabulary, or we should take it seriously and put certain questions to ourselves. The first question to be asked is, "Where does *brahman* come in, in human life?" It comes in two dichotomic aspects of life - one is in the here and now and the other is in eternity. In the here and now *brahman* pertains to the experiencing of things, ideas, and values. Things are that which have existential emphasis. Ideas pertain to the illumination of consciousness. And, values refer to the operational dynamic of all action promptings. This is the immanent aspect of *brahman*. The transcendent aspect of *brahman* reconciles with everything specific, such as name, form, and action. The first half deals with experiential aesthetics, the second with imperiential transcendence. This *Upaniṣad* is a major book of science in which experiential aesthetics and imperiential transcendence are unitively treated to make the study a discipline of the individual and a universal model of life for all.

When the Absolute *(brahman)* is described as the dichotomic infrastructure, enveloped by the non-dual reality of holistic homogeneity, it is not an unfamiliar subject to us. We find the same program in everything. Nothing can remain stable when it is in a process of transformation. However, it is out of the formless that the many formations and transformations come. Ultimately, the transformed has to find its original state of transcendence. Between the first formlessness or non-being and the last formlessness, there arise many conceivable entities. Because the program has a beginning and an end, what is in between is time. All formations happen through rhythmic throbs. A throb is an expansion from a dimensionless location into an occupiable space with dimension, and an eventual reverting back to a spaceless location. Thus, along with time, space comes. The throb happens as a monomark of existence, and existence is meaningful only when it is substantiated. Substance is the magical projection which makes a body manifest in the time/space continuum. A throb can be of a time period that can be measured in millennia or it can be a hundred-thousandth part of a moment. That means within a throb, there can be historic elaboration.

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Every occurrence comes from some necessity. Each need is different from all others. What fulfills one need can be different in all its physical properties from that which fulfils another. Yet, all formations are subjected to the laws of physics, chemistry and mathematics. Consequently, life and death become the expression of complementary laws. Between two throbs or two pulsations, there can also be a pause - somewhat like that of Max Plank's constant *h*. Once you know the secret, all knowledge is given to you. That is why *brahmavidyā* is called the foundation of all sciences.

In the relation of human beings to the supreme reality and God's relation with the world, we have seen a dichotomy which is vague on many counts. One of India's leading philosopher-teachers, Madhva, earnestly goes into this problem to discern the cause of untruth, distress, agony, etc. Many people muse on the glory of realization, and dream of someday reaching there while, as if from behind, they are eaten up by the canker of ego and the darkness of ignorance. Every religion and every philosophy is trying its best to assure us that there is a bright tomorrow when we will be in the benevolent hands of the Supreme. This is a kind of panacea where the believer is held captive by self-hypnosis. But, if we can shake ourselves out of this stupor and become more wakeful and conscious, we will see that we are in the hellfire of ignorance - an ignorance that we ourselves have generated, if not during this very life, then in a previous one. It is all because we glorify the highest and neglect our existential life.

Unfortunately, our existential life is one of functioning as a masochist and/or a sadist, taking pleasure in hurting ourselves, as well as feeling the vigor of life in the blood we or others profusely shed. Although we make many hypotheses painted in numerous colorful forms that fascinate our imagination, they do not help us to come out of the quagmire of illusion. The next course for us in our search for the Absolute or Self-realization is to give time to the factual situations of life. However, this does not mean one helpless person should hold another helpless person on their lap with the two sitting together bemoaning their fate. That will not help either. We have to see our egos clearly to know which aspects are malevolent, and which aspects are benevolent. We have to rigorously clear away the agony-brewing aspects of ignorance or selfishness. The selfishness which we speak of here is the bias which in every walk of life leads us away from that cen-

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tral benevolence to which we should gravitate every moment.

The purificatory discipline of the individuated self is the major door to salvation. The same scriptural texts that give us the idea of release or liberation also help to give relief from the proliferation of our ego's power to demolish. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to sublimate the ego's power by spiritual reconstruction if we wish to reach our goal. That is the next thing we need to look into in depth in this *Upaniṣad*. All that has been given thus far is by way of an introduction to the third chapter *(adhyāya)* which begins the mainstream of the teaching.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The author has relied heavily on the Sri Ramakrishna Math translation of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, for which he is very grateful. All quotations from the works of Narayana Guru, as well as quotations from the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads* and other Sanskrit texts, which are not otherwise noted, are the author's own translations.

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SANSKRIT INDEX

ābhāsa cattanya, 215
āditya(s), 29, 93-94, 187, 228-229, 250, 259, 327, 523ff.
āgama, 215
agni, *xxii*, 27, 32, 45-46, 50, 86-87, 165, 226, 249, 259, 345ff., 514ff.
agnihotra, 18
aham, 70, 153-154, 164, 177ff., 325
ājña, 76, 102
ākāśa, *xxi*, 10, 65ff., 95, 338, 435, 439, 552ff.
ākṛti, 94, 171
akṣan, 439, 444
akṣara, 421
amṛtam, 133, 136ff., 142ff., 145ff., 174, 429-430, 435-436, 444, 469ff., 508ff., 568
anāhata, 75, 100, 102
ānanda, 461, 609
anantam, 232, 496
annam, 26, 38-39, 102, 105, 133, 165ff., 202ff., 226, 417, 420, 426-427
anu, 171
āp(aḥ), 23, 27, 231-232, 349ff., 512ff.
apauruṣeya, *xiii*
āraṇya, *ix*
āraṇyakas, 6
arcana, 23, 167
arka, 23-24, 27, 45ff., 113-114, 122, 124, 130-131, 142
artha, 238, 243, 248-249
āśrama, 200
asuras, 20, 51ff., 72-73, 167, 566
aśva, 99ff., 20, 45-46
aśvamedha, 45ff., 238, 277ff.
atisṛṣṭiḥ, 165ff.
ātman, *xxii*, 35, 41, 45-46, 95, 150, 153, 161, 169, 172, 173, 177-178, 198ff., 233, 252, 311, 378ff., 414ff., 461,

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475ff., 503, 508ff., 567ff., 571, 578, 595, 602, 608ff., 628ff.
aum, xxii, 1, 2, 9ff., 20, 31, 34-35, 53, 62, 266, 321, 363, 412, 605, 628
āvaraṇa, 155
avidyā, 593
avyākṛtam, 168
ayāsya angirasa, 77ff., 107ff., 117, 125, 167, 295, 324

bhakti, 160
bhān, 35ff., 103
bhāna, 485, 597
bhānāśraya, 597
bhānavṛtti, 171
bhāva, 78
bhūmī, 131-132
brahma, 197
brahmacārī(ya), 144, 200, 264, 463
brahman, viii, xix, 41, 115, 144, 165ff., 168, 175, 177ff., 182ff., 246ff., 249, 265, 321, 327ff., 419, 429ff., 433ff., 447, 452, 492, 509ff., 568ff., 578ff., 581ff., 601, 603ff., 628ff., 632ff.
brāhmaṇas, 5, 182ff., 191-193, 392ff., 428, 476ff.
brahmaṇaspati, 115, 117, 209
brahmaspati, 209
brahmavidyā, 33, 61, 105, 117, 175, 373, 409, 427, 432ff., 451, 475, 569, 588-589, 635
bṛhad, 177
bṛhaspati, 111-112, 117

cakṣuḥ, 61, 93-94, 169, 255-256, 269, 439, 492-493, 523ff.
candas, 117
candraḥ, 99, 232, 251, 259
catuṣpāda, 10

dakṣiṇa, xix, 444-445
deva(s), xx, 20, 51ff., 64, 68ff., 72-73, 83ff., 86, 105, 165ff., 167, 177-178, 180, 202-203, 216, 232-233, 242ff., 251-252, 258-259, 290, 306, 566
devaloka, 194-196, 201, 242ff., 245, 260
devata, 80, 83, 86-87, 90, 93-94, 96, 99-100

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dharma, xxv, 149; and *dharmī*, 171, 181, 189ff., 195, 197, 238, 248-249, 557ff., 600; and *artha*, *kama* and *moksa*, 358
dhyāna, 12, 117, 296
dīk, *dīkṣaḥ*, *dīśaḥ*, 9, 29-30, 83, 96, 363ff., 528ff.
dīpika, 14
dyauḥ, 228-229

gandharva(s), 20-21
gāyatrī, xxiv, 569
gṛhastha, 200, 264, 617

haṁsa, 100, 102
hiraṇyagarbha, 23-24, 27, 29, 52, 55, 103, 133-134, 172, 204, 208, 252ff., 277ff., 288, 378ff., 436ff., 599, 630
hīta, 409-410
hṛdaya, xxi, 492-493
hṛdayākaśaḥ, 552

idam sarvam, 38-39, 177-178, 188, 198-199, 205-206, 236-237, 246-247, 400, 503, 508ff., 571ff.
indra, 228, 231
indriyās, 82, 88, 231
īśvara, 29, 265, 400

jīva, 177
jīvātma, 461, 599
jñāna, 44, 296
jyotiḥ, *jyotis*, 133, 136ff., 140ff., 145ff.

kaivalya, 158
kāma, 15, 134, 198-199, 238, 243, 248, 475ff., 600
karma, 13, 15, 21-22, 191, 197ff., 202, 249, 265, 272, 467
karma kāṇḍa, 22
kriya, 94
kṣatriya, 182ff., 191-193, 197, 392ff., 428, 476ff., 577

lakṣaṇa, 603ff

madhu, 507ff., 512-513, 515, 519, 523, 528, 532, 539, 546,

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

552, 557, 559-560, 564, 567ff., 574, 601
madhyama, 6, 222, 455
manaḥ, manas, 23, 35, 42-43, 68-69, 99, 169, 198-199, 210, 213-214, 218-219, 221, 226, 228-229, 250-251
manana, 85, 117, 162, 338, 596
maṇipūra, 75
manu, 177-178, 181, 183-184, 209
manuṣyāḥ, 158ff., 162, 177-178, 194-195, 205-206, 216
manuṣyālokaḥ, 243
martyam, 429-430, 432, 436, 439
mātariśvan, 15, 521
māyā, 155, 468, 600-601
medhayā, 202ff.
mokṣa, 22, 102, 238, 243, 248, 433, 593
mṛtyu(h), 23, 45-46, 80, 83, 86, 87, 90, 93-94, 96, 99-100, 133, 145ff., 255, 279, 281
mūlādhāra, 74-75, 100

nāma, 153, 168, 247, 265, 269, 426; and *rūpa*, 272-273, 602
neti neti, 447-448, 453
nididhyāsana, 473, 476, 596
nitya anitya, 433-434, 452

pāpam, and puṇyam, 251-252
pāpmā, 54, 58, 61, 64, 68-69, 83, 86
para, 6, 221-222, 455
param, 183
paramārtha, 560ff., 593
paramātma, 77ff., 461
parjanya, 182-183, 185
paśyanti, 6, 222, 455
pitā, 205-206, 218-219
pitaraḥ, 216
pitṛ, 194, 196
pitṛlokaḥ, 196, 201, 242ff., 245
prajāpati, 27, 29, 31-32, 34, 36, 40ff., 45ff., 51ff., 84-85, 117, 154, 159ff., 162ff., 167, 176, 184-185, 188ff., 208ff., 211-212, 217, 227, 232-233, 236ff., 241ff., 252ff., 259ff., 278ff., 288, 296, 325, 418ff.,

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

prājña, xxi, 491-492, 555-556
prakṛti, 38, 81, 84, 163, 203, 287, 510ff., 600
prāṇa, xxi, 15, 29-30, 42, 58, 72ff., 78ff., 84-85, 88, 90, 100, 107ff., 119, 124ff., 132, 146, 167, 169, 172, 176, 198-199, 208, 210ff., 225-226, 228-229, 231ff., 239, 242, 251ff., 255-256, 259ff., 263, 272-273, 288ff., 382ff., 413ff., 417ff., 424ff., 444, 519ff
praṇava, 10, 31, 78, 100ff., 569
prāṇāyāma, 360
preyas, 53, 129, 467
prīya (m), 172-173, 177-178, 473ff.
pṛthivī, 9-10, 27, 226, 249-250, 508-509
pūrṇam, xxiii, 1ff.
puruṣa, xxii, 81, 84-85, 153ff., 177-178, 205-206, 287ff., 402, 436ff., 505, 508ff., 575-576, 599, 601
puruṣārtha, 248
pūrvapakṣa, 328
putram, 246-247

rasa, 57
ṛg, ṛk, viii, 113, 119, 143, 167, 248, 324
rudrāḥ, 187
rūpa, 94, 168, 265, 269, 492-493

śabda(ḥ), 357ff., 483ff., 492-493, 546
sahasrāra, 76, 100
sāma(n), 113, 118ff., 127, 130, 132-133, 167, 249, 324
samādhi, xxvii, 18, 132, 184
saṃsāra, 1, 7, 21, 65, 102, 174, 182, 418, 469, 505
saṃskāra, 44-45, 123, 155
saṁvatsaraḥ, 9-10, 16, 35, 45-46, 236, 241
saṃvedana, 14
sannyāsa, 459, 619ff.
sannyāsi(a), 200, 264
sarvam, 153, 164ff., 168-169, 172-173, 175, 177-178
sarveṣām bhūtānām, 571
sat and *asat*, 133, 136ff., 145ff., 157
śatarūpa, 209
satkāraṇavāda, 278
sattva, rajas, tamas, 81, 84, 113, 291-292, 324, 356, 504
satyasya satyam, 413-414, 418, 447-448

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

siddhānta, 328
smṛti, *xiv*, 13, 156, 462-463, 466
soma, 165ff.
śraddha, 338
śravaṇa, 476, 595
śreyas, 53, 129, 467
śrotram, 64, 169, 255-256, 492-493, 496
sṛṣṭa, 167
sṛṣṭiḥ, 164
śruti, *xiv*, 12-13, 156, 277, 462-463, 466, 595-596
śūdra, 137ff., 188-189, 413-414, 559-560
sūrya (n), 14, 177-178
suṣupti, 319-320, 409ff.
sūtra, 628-629
sūtrātma, *xx*, 77ff., 277, 315ff., 460
svadharma, 191
svādhiṣṭhāna, 75
svapna, 405ff.
svara, 120-121, 129
svarga, 22
svarita, 130-131
svayambhū, 165

taijasa, 52
tamas, 224
tamasa, 52, 133, 145ff.
tanmatra, 292
tapas(ya), *xxvii*, 44, 202ff.
tejas, 224
turīya, 124
tyāga, 595

udgāna, 62-63, 100, 102
udgītha, 51ff., 76, 87, 94, 100, 102, 121-122, 124, 130-131, 288ff., 295-296
ūha and apoha, 282-283
upaniṣad, *x*
upāsanā, 12, 28, 277, 280
upāsīta, 169, 173
uṣas, 21

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Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri

vaikhari, 6, 221-222, 455
vaiśvānara, vaiśvānarāgni, 9-10, 15, 29, 31, 52, 55, 288
vāk, vācaḥ, 9-10, 19-29, 35, 54, 56, 86ff., 118ff., 125, 132, 167, 169, 198-199, 210, 213-214, 226, 249-250, 255-256, 424, 514-515
vāmadeva, 180-181
vānaprastha, 200, 264
vārtika, xvi, 277ff.
varuṇa, 182-183, 185
vāsanā, 224, 449-450
vāyuḥ, 32, 90, 258, 263, 343ff., 432ff., 435ff., 519
veda, viii, xiii
vidyuti, 335, 539ff.
vijñāna, 312, 402ff., 450, 476
vijñānamayaḥ, 402
vijñānātma, 312, 318ff., 597
vikṣepa, 155
virāj, xxii, 29, 50, 153, 157ff., 164ff., 168, 191-193, 255-256
virāt puruṣa, 599
viśuddhi, 76, 102, 119-120
viśva, 224
viśvedevāḥ, 187
viśvātmā, 315ff., 597
vyākṛti, 171

yajña, 16, 38-39, 42, 127, 216, 246-247
yajus, viii, 113, 115, 167, 248, 324
yathārtha, 560ff, 593

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GENERAL INDEX

Absolute, *vii, xix*ff., 10, 19, 21, 39, 47, 48, 55, 94-95, 111, 144, 181, 184, 193, 197, 200, 208, 236, 243, 265, 271, 313, 334, 393-394, 412, 433ff., 451, 570, 583, 602ff., 625, 633ff; science of, 10, 12, 33, 61, 117, 299, 390, 409, 417, 433ff., 451, 454ff.; will of, 76
Absorption, state of, 101
Action, faculties of, 91
Action, organs of, 88-89
Action(s), 265ff., 272ff., 280, 286, 630
Agni, *xv*, 277, 374ff.
Air, 59, 343ff., 432ff., 436ff., 529ff.
Ajātaśatru, *x*, 321, 327ff., 628
Alice In Wonderland, 395ff.
Allah, 282, 355, 399
Appearance, *xi*, 353ff., 604
Aristotle, 223, 272, 408
Aryan, and pre-Aryan, 287-288
Aśvins, 364ff., 744ff., 585
Aurobindo, Śri, *xv*ff.
Axiology, 115, 284ff.

Bādarāyaṇa, *xlv*
Basho, Matsu, 537, 550
Being, 48; and non-being, *viii*; and nothingness, 47, 52, 379ff.
Bergson, Henri, 287, 408-409, 468
Bhagavad Gīta, *xxiv*, 5, 13, 42, 77-78, 131, 191, 220, 355, 367-368, 398, 440, 458, 460, 468, 474-475, 479, 489, 587, 623ff.
Bible, 82, 268
Big Bang, 497-498
Birth, *xxii*, 112
Body, causal, gross, subtle, 282ff.
Bondage, 501
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Brahma Sūtrās, 201, 433, 470
Brāhmaṇas, *viii*, *x*; *Aśvamedha*, *xvi*, *xvii*, 277; *Madhu*, *xvi*, *xvii*; *Śathapatha*, *ix*, 277; *Udgītha*, *xvi*, *xvii*, 289, 295
Brilliance, concept of, 140-141
Buddha, 86, 89, 293, 357, 360, 499, 620

Cartesian coordinates, 26
Cathexis, ego and object, 54
Causal state, 52, 278
Cause, and effect, 51ff., 203-204, 227-228, 278, 282, 403-404; first, 24
Chattampi Swami, 297
Christianity, 48, 98, 163, 245, 355, 622-623
Cloud, 546ff.
Cognition, 314; and connation and affection, 246
Concept, 62, 100, 224; and percept, 227
Conditioning, 57, 123
Consciousness, 16, 45, 60, 121, 131, 180, 219, 307ff., 313ff., 401; states of, 130, 184-186, 211ff., 405ff., 430, 481ff.; witnessing, 253
Consonants, 119-121
Contemplation, 114, 144
Cosmos, 11, 273
Creation, and myth of, *vii*, *ix*, *xv*, 5, 28-29, 34, 36, 40, 62, 66, 87, 103, 130, 163ff., 167, 211, 224-225, 227-228, 244, 323, 380ff.; and dissolution, 109

Dadhyac, 574ff., 585
Darkness, 24, 369ff.
Dawn, *viii*, 6, 10, 12, 16, 21, 279, 364ff.
Death, *xix*, *xx*, 19, 23-24, 31, 41, 45, 47, 52, 81, 99, 112, 134, 157ff., 205ff., 242, 253ff., 279ff., 285ff., 292ff., 371ff., 381ff., 390-391, 607, 625
Deathless principle, 273ff.
Deep sleep, *xxii*, 409ff.
Demons, 51, 55
Desire, 15, 37, 43
Dialectical, 2, 5; counterparts, 25, 84; methodology, *xx*, 119; polarities, 31, 167
Dialectics, *xxiv*, 41
Dialogues, The, of Plato, 5, 40, 271, 353, 472

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Directions, 18, 364ff., 528ff.
Discrimination, 91, 93-94; light of, 64-65; power of, 81, 86
Divine Comedy, The, of Dante, 92, 97, 196
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, 63, 92
Dragons of Eden, 85, 410
Dravidians, *xv*, 577
Dream state, *xxii*, 405ff.

Ear, 56, 67, 89, 528-529
Earth, 16, 18, 28, 52, 208, 226, 509ff.
Egg, the world, 103
Ego, 1, 33-34, 49, 52, 82, 103, 107; identification, 81
Elements, 52, 70, 346, 439ff.
Emancipation, principles of, 85
Epistemology, 115, 284ff.
Ethics, foundation of, 42
Evil, *ix*, *xxii*, 55, 63
Evolution, 28, 74, 282
Eye, 14, 56, 62-63, 89, 420ff., 439ff., 444ff., 523ff.

Family, 370
Father, 202ff., 219-220, 239, 248-249; universal, 202ff., 232ff.
Fear, 24, 52, 82, 157ff., 242
Field, and knower of, 479ff.
Fire, *viii*, *xxii*, 15, 28, 43, 52, 70, 146, 208, 217, 226-227, 249-250, 259ff., 345ff., 515ff.
Food, 41ff., 106, 166, 202ff., 232-233, 417, 420, 426ff.
Form, 62, 269ff.
Freedom, 99, 176-177
Freud, Sigmund, 54, 76, 158

Gandhi, Mahatma, 90
Gaṇeśa, 15
Gārgī, 298ff., 454
Gārgya, *x*, 321, 327ff., 628
Gaudapāda, 603
Genesis, 244, 284
God, 25, 38, 62, 70, 83, 85, 94, 159, 163ff., 207, 238, 244-245, 265, 390, 399-400, 566, 609ff.
Gods, *viii*, 51, 55, 179ff., 192, 202-203, 205ff., 244, 252,

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263
Guru, and disciple, 473ff.

Happiness, and unhappiness, 135-136
Heart, 60, 75, 100, 331, 552ff.
Heaven, 228ff.
Heidegger, Martin, 37, 42
Heraclitus, 77
Honey, 508ff., 513ff., 519, 523, 528ff., 532, 539-540, 546, 552-553, 557, 560, 564, 568ff., 574, 579, 601
Horse, 6, 17ff., 19, 32, 279ff., 322-323, 574ff.; sacrifice and sacrificial, 10, 12ff., 20-21, 46, 106, 130, 277, 324, 389, 390
Hugo, Victor, 58, 92, 98
Hunger, 15, 23ff., 31, 35-36, 40, 52, 83-84, 167, 168, 208, 242, 261, 267, 285ff., 288, 390-391
Husserl, Edmund, 42, 223

Ignorance, 48, 592-593, 635
Immanent, 52, 65
Immortal and immortality, *vii, xi,* 134, 142, 174, 292ff., 430ff., 434ff., 444ff., 456ff., 469ff., 625ff.
Incipient Memories, 19, 408-409
Indra, *xv,* 82, 182-183, 185
Intelligence, 14, 84
Intelligibles, and visibles, 271, 353, 605
Interior Castle, The, 196
Islam, 48, 97, 98, 354-355

Jaimini, *xiv,* 223
Jain, 65, 489
James, William, 59
Jaspers, Karl, 42
Jesus Christ, 26, 39, 87, 89, 98, 99, 128, 293, 355, 357, 499-500, 609, 620-621
Judaism, 48, 98
Jung, Carl Gustav, 158, 429, 482

Kalidasa, 549-550
Kant, Emmanuel, 13, 191, 423

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Kapila, 287, 505
Kātyāyanī, 301ff., 454, 462ff., 617-618
Knower, *xlii*, 31, 231; and known, 504ff.
Knowledge, *viii*, *x*, *xiii*, *xiv*, 43, 88-89, 141, 307ff., 313ff., 425ff., 479ff., 498-499, 506ff.; faculties of, 91, organs of, 88

Lakṣmi, 129
Language, development of, 6; to learn, 115ff.; scheme of, 117
Laws, of the world, 135-136
Leibnitz, 600
Liberation 248, 631ff.
Life, 15, 32, 40-41, 43; stages of, 128
Light, *xi*, *xiv*, *xxii*, 43, 275
Lightning, 10, 19, 335ff., 539ff.
Logic, *xiii*, 612ff.
Logos, 77, 117
Love, 17, 37, 238

Macrocosm, and microcosm, 2, 17, 33, 67, 239-240
Madhva, *xvi*, *xviii*, 13, 28, 278, 356, 635
Mahābhārata, 13, 42, 491, 538
Maitreyī, *x*, 298ff., 454ff., 460ff., 500ff., 608ff., 617ff.
Manifested, universe, 169; world, *xix*, 135
Manu, 162ff., 463-464
Maruts, 336ff.
Marx, Karl, 26
Meditation, 3, 56, 170, 173, 180, 193, 201-202, 206-207, 236, 244, 476-477
Memory, 117, 230, 245
Methodology, 115, 284ff., 633
Mind, 40, 44, 53, 68-69, 71-72, 180, 210ff., 228ff., 233ff., 238ff., 247-248, 251, 260, 294-295, 310-311, 317, 532ff.
Mohammed, the Prophet, 87, 500
Moon, 17, 168, 232, 235ff., 237ff., 251-252, 259ff., 330ff., 532ff.
Mortal, 430ff., 433ff., 436ff., 439ff.
Mother, 110, 219-220, 239, 248-249
Muller, Max, *xiii*, 509
Murchie, Guy, 66, 90, 540-541
Music, 67, 120-121, 486-487

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Naciketas, 82
Name, and form, *xiii*, 62, 168ff., 265ff., 602
Narayana Guru, *xiii*, *xvi*, *xxiv*ff., 26, 34, 90, 283, 297, 337, 346, 357, 360ff., 368-369, 398-399, 455, 461, 468, 485, 486
Nataraja Guru, *xxiv*, 13, 362
Nature, *viii*, 38, 57-58, 81, 104, 110ff., 239, 244
Nescience, 55, 593
New Testament, 91, 465-466, 472-473
Non-existence, 36, 282
Non-Self, 70, 81
Nothingness, 128
Noumenon, 3, 40, 49, 311
Nyāya, 36

Old Testament, 14, 91, 238, 620
One, the, 605ff.
Organ(s), of action, 55, 123, 204, 255ff., 494ff.; of speech, 86, 226-227, 424ff.; of perception, 123, 204, 255ff., 494ff.; sense, 44, 55, 229

Paradox, 2, 208
Perception, *xiii*, 224, 230-231, 234-235, 269ff., 592; visual, 95
Person, universal, 31
Phenomenal world, *xix*, 31, 42
Phenomenality, 11, 21, 66, 84, 253; transcendence of, 41
Plato, 5, 6, 40, 77, 271, 457, 486-487, 605
Poetry, 30, 93
Primal scream, 103, 267
Progeny, 246ff.
Projection, 40, 73, 164ff., 167
Psychological types, 193
Pythagoras, 486-487

Qur'an, 87, 89, 91, 466

Rain, 546ff.
Ramakrishna, Śri, 90
Ramana Maharshi, 90

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Rāmānuja, *xvi, xviii*, 13, 28, 219, 278, 355, 401
Rāmāyaṇa, 85
Real, the, reality, *vii, x*, 2, 137-138
Renunciation, 593ff., 618ff., 632ff.
Republic, The, 353, 407
Reputation, 44, 89
Respiratory system, 60-61
Right, and left, 444ff.
Rites, rituals, *viii, ix, x*, 12, 30, 98-99, 202ff., 205ff., 216, 244, 264-265, 277
Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 48
Rudra, 182-183, 185
Ruler, and ruled, 108

Sacrifice, *viii, ix, xix*, 16, 18, 36, 43, 130-131, 166ff., 194-195, 205ff., 238, 241, 246-247, 249, 278ff.
Saigyo, 534ff.
Sāṁkhya, 287
Śankara, *xiv, xviff., xxvii*, 7, 12, 13, 21-22, 82, 154, 200, 219, 221, 254, 277ff., 284ff., 355-356, 395, 401, 406, 412, 433, 452, 461, 466, 470-471, 489-490, 511, 577, 598ff., 603-604, 620
Sanskrit, 119ff.
Sartre, Jean Paul, 98
Śatarūpa, 162ff., 463-464
Seer, and seeker; *vii*, 2, 503; and seen, 18, 234
Self, *xi, xx, xxii*, 1, 11, 43, 62, 70, 77, 81, 103-104, 125, 131, 145, 150, 154, 163, 169ff., 173ff., 184, 192-193, 200, 213, 228, 233, 252ff., 265-266, 269, 271, 296, 302ff., 306ff., 313ff., 328-329, 339ff., 360-361, 367ff., 398-399, 402ff., 412, 414ff., 418, 451ff., 455ff., 470, 476ff., 488-489, 496, 503-504, 506ff., 568, 571ff., 592ff., 596ff., 602, 608ff., 629, 632ff.; and non-Self, 268, 306ff., 322, 337, 381ff., 394; cosmic, 316ff.; universal, 313ff.
Self-knowledge, 303
Self-love, 107
Self-realization 11, 632-633
Semantics, 5-6, 223
Semitic, 83, 159, 164, 167, 244-245, 285
Senses, 96, 107
Shakespeare, William, 92, 548-549
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Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 550-551
Sin, 48, 65, 86
Sky, 339ff.
Smell, 84, 89, 92, 94-95
Socrates, 5, 99, 271, 393, 407ff.
Soma, 126, 330ff.
Sound, 357ff., 484ff.
Space, 10, 16, 66, 90, 184, 316, 432ff., 436ff., 552ff.
Speech, 10, 19, 35, 57, 59, 84, 198-199, 210ff., 247ff., 290
Spinoza, Benedict, 600
Spirit, 6, 7, 41, 70, 244; and matter, 287ff.
St. John's Gospel, 37, 77, 266
Sun, *viii, xxii*, 10, 14, 16ff., 62-63, 92, 228-229, 231, 234ff., 259ff., 263-264, 327ff., 432-433, 523ff.
Superimposition, 28, 431-432, 592-593
Sureśvara's *Vārtika*, *xvi*, 277ff., 289, 295, 466-467, 471, 511-512, 591ff., 595, 598ff., 603-604, 628ff.

Tao Te Ching, 282, 573
Taste, 56, 89
Thoreau, Henry, 537
Thunder, 10, 19
Time, 5, 11, 16, 43, 181, 184, 316, 324
Time/space continuum, 130, 154, 634
Tolstoy, Leo, 92
Torah, 87, 89
Transcendence, 26, 41, 45; and Immanence, 634
Transcendent state, 52, 65
Transformation, 5, 42, 44; of symbols, 26, 278
Truth, *x, xi, xiii, xiv, xix*, 3, 7, 10, 49, 53, 55, 85, 92, 98, 125, 174, 189-190, 215-216, 250, 271-272, 414ff., 448ff., 507ff., 560ff., 604ff.
Tyāgarājaswāmy, 121

Unconscious, 14, collective, 29
Upaniṣads, *x, xviii*ff., 5, 10ff., 22, 87, 89-90, 91, 225-226, 277, 487ff.; *Aitareya*, 26, 94, 103, 141, 227, 264, 281, 349ff., 429; *Chāndogya*, 103, 118-119, 122, 140, 141, 143, 174, 227, 266, 279, 289, 296, 432, 467-468, 488, 569; *Īśāvāsya*, xi, 7, 26, 94, 257, 457, 507, 571; *Kaṭha*, 279, 371ff., 399, 418; *Māṇḍūkya*, 123-124, 140, 266,

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411-412, 491-492, 577; *Muṇḍaka*, 141, 143, 365, 369, 577, 623-624; *Śvetāśvatara*, 94, 365, 369; *Taittirīya*, 26, 94, 103, 144, 404, 419-420
Uṣas, 364ff.

Values, 49, 57, 63, 129, 143, 173ff.
Varieties of Religious Experience, 99, 394
Vāruṇa, *xv*, 182-183, 185
Vedānta, *xvi*, *xxiv*, 18, 22, 77, 141, 277
Vedānta Sūtras, 155
Vedas, *viii*ff., *xiii*ff., 12, 13, 22, 156, 195, 197, 214ff., 277, 287ff., 487ff.; *Atharva*, *viii*, 6, 287, 487ff., 574ff.; *Ṛg*, *viii*, 27, 30, 39, 113, 214ff., 287ff., 331ff., 336ff., 340ff., 366ff., 373ff., 389, 427, 487ff., 576-577; *Sama*, *viii*, 30, 39, 113, 214ff., 288ff., 389, 487ff., 576-577; *Yajur*, *viii-ix*, 6, 12, 39, 113, 214ff., 287ff., 299, 389, 453-454, 487ff., 576-577
Viṣṇu, 422, 591
Vital breath (energy, forces), 15, 43-44, 52, 107ff., 111, 119, 134, 199, 201, 210ff., 225, 226, 228ff., 232ff., 239, 247-248, 251ff., 256ff., 262, 264, 272ff., 288, 292ff., 325, 358ff., 414, 417ff., 519ff.
Vivekānanda, Swami, 90
Vowels, 119-121
Vyāsa, 577, 583

Wakeful state, 63, 411-412
Water, *viii*, 28, 52, 107, 208, 232, 349ff., 512ff.
Wealth, 128, 241ff., 243
Whitman, Walt, 615ff.
Wind, *viii*, 520ff.
Wisdom, *vii*, *ix*ff., *xiii-xiv*, 6-7, 57, 67, 85, 92
Word, 19, 37, 40, 53, 59, 78, 89-90, 92, 117, 210ff., 227-228, 232ff., 238ff., 248, 266ff., 290, 456; testimony, 52

Yājñavalkya, *x*, *xv*, *xvii*ff., 5, 159ff., 299ff., 453ff., 460ff., 496ff., 608ff., 617ff.
Yama, 82, 182-183, 185, 373ff.
Year, 237ff.
Yin-yang, 40, 167, 271, 287, 369

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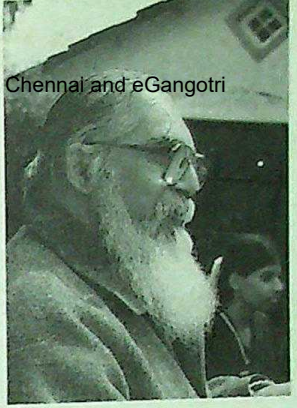

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